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THE

STRAND MAGAZINE

An Illustrated Monthly

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
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Vol. XIX.

JANUARY TO JUNE

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"THROUGH THE SMOKE HE DIMLY DISCERNED THE FIGURE OF A STRANGER."

(*See page* 16.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xix. JANUARY, 1900. No. 109.

The Brass Bottle.

By F. Anstey.

Author of "Vice-Versâ," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

HORACE VENTIMORE RECEIVES A COMMISSION.

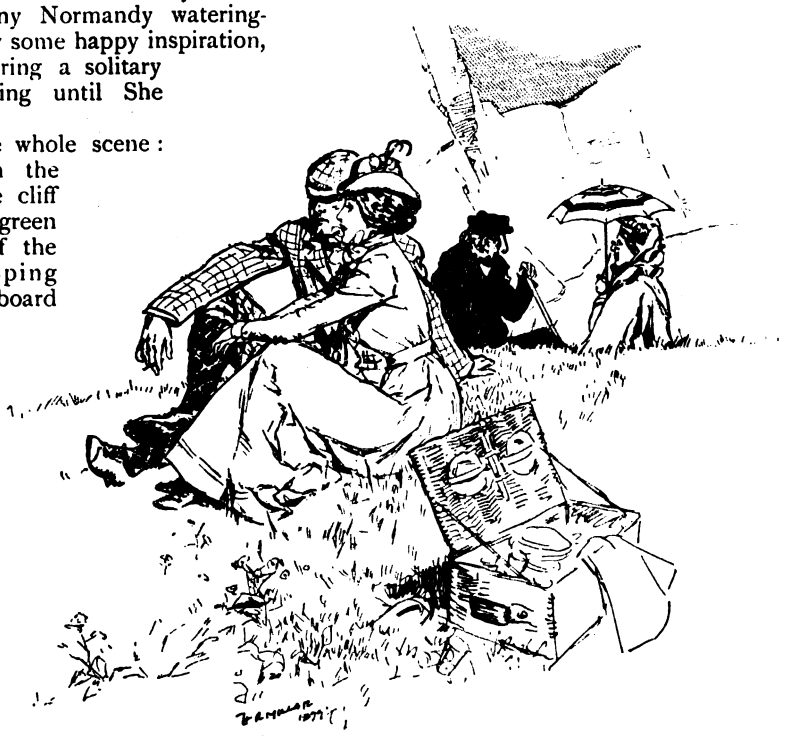
"THIS day six weeks—just six weeks ago!" Horace Ventimore said, half aloud, to himself, and pulled out his watch. "Half-past twelve—what was I doing at half-past twelve?"

As he sat at the window of his office in Great Cloister Street, Westminster, he made his thoughts travel back to a certain glorious morning in August which now seemed so remote and irrecoverable. At this precise time he was waiting on the balcony of the Hotel de la Plage—the sole hostelry of St. Luc-en-Port, the tiny Normandy watering-place upon which, by some happy inspiration, he had lighted during a solitary cycling tour—waiting until She should appear.

He could see the whole scene: the tiny cove, with the violet shadow of the cliff sleeping on the green water; the swell of the waves lazily lapping against the diving-board from which he had plunged half an hour before; he remembered the long swim out to the buoy; the exhilarated anticipation with which he had dressed and climbed the steep path to the hotel terrace.

For was he not to pass the whole remainder of that blissful day in Sylvia Futvoye's society? Were they not to cycle together (there were, of course, others of the party — but they did not count), to cycle over to Veulettes, to picnic there under the cliff, and ride back—always together—in the sweet-scented dusk, over the slopes, between the poplars or through the cornfields glowing golden against a sky of warm purple?

Now he saw himself going round to the gravelled courtyard in front of the hotel with a sudden dread of missing her. There was nothing there but the little low cart, with its canvas tilt, which was to convey Professor Futvoye and his wife to the place of *rendezvous*.



"THE PICNIC UNDER THE CLIFF."

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There was Sylvia at last, distractingly fair and fresh in her cool, pink blouse and cream-coloured skirt; how gracious and friendly and generally delightful she had been throughout that unforgettable day, which was supreme amongst others only a little less perfect, and all now fled for ever!

They had had drawbacks, it was true. Old Futvoye was perhaps the least bit of a bore at times, with his interminable disquisitions on Egyptian art and ancient Oriental character-writing, in which he seemed convinced that Horace must feel a perfervid interest, as, indeed, he thought it politic to affect. The Professor was a most learned archæologist, and positively bulged with information on his favourite subjects; but it is just possible that Horace might have been less curious concerning the distinction between Cuneiform and Aramæan or Kufic and Arabic inscriptions if his informant had happened to be the father of anybody else. However, such insincerities as these are but so many evidences of sincerity.

So with self-tormenting ingenuity Horace conjured up various pictures from that Norman holiday of his. And now? . . . . He looked up from the papers and tracing cloth on his desk, and round the small panelled room which served him as an office, at the framed plans and photographs, the set squares and T squares on the walls, and felt a dull resentment against his surroundings. From his window he commanded a cheerful view of a tall, mouldering wall, once part of the Abbey boundaries, surmounted by *chevaux-de-frise*, above whose rust-attenuated spikes some plane trees stretched their yellowing branches.

"She would have come to care for me," Horace's thoughts ran on, disjointedly. "I could have sworn that that last day of all—and her people didn't seem to object to me. Her mother asked me cordially enough to call on them when they were back in town. When I did——"

When he had called, there had been a difference—not an unusual sequel to an acquaintanceship begun in a Continental watering-place. It was difficult to define, but unmistakable—a certain formality and constraint on Mrs. Futvoye's part, and even on Sylvia's, which seemed intended to warn him that it is not every friendship that survives the Channel passage. So he had gone away sore at heart, but fully recognising that any advances in future must come from their side. They might ask him to dinner, or at least to call again; but more than a month had passed, and they had made no sign. No. it was all over; he must consider himself dropped.

"After all," he told himself, with a short and anything but mirthful laugh, "it's natural enough. Mrs. Futvoye has probably been making inquiries about my professional prospects. It's better as it is. What earthly chance have I got of marrying unless I can get work of my own? It's all I can do to keep myself decently. I've no right to dream of asking anyone—to say nothing of Sylvia—to marry me. I should only be rushing into temptation if I saw any more of her. She's not for a poor beggar like me, who was born unlucky. Well, whining won't do any good—let's have a look at Beevor's latest performance."

He spread out a large coloured plan, in a corner of which appeared the name of "William Beevor, Architect," and began to study it in a spirit of anything but appreciation.

"Beevor gets on," he said to himself. "Heaven knows I don't grudge him his success. He's a good fellow—though he *does* build architectural atrocities, and seems to like 'em. Who am I to give myself airs? He's successful—I'm not. Yet if I only had his opportunities, what wouldn't I make of them!"

Let it be said here that this was not the ordinary self-delusion of an incompetent. Ventimore really had talent above the average, with ideals and ambitions which might under better conditions have attained recognition and fulfilment before this.

But he was not quite energetic enough, besides being too proud, to push himself into notice, and hitherto he had met with persistent ill-luck.

So Horace had no other occupation now but to give Beevor, whose offices and clerk he shared, such slight assistance as he might require, and it was by no means cheering to feel that every year of this enforced semi-idleness left him further handicapped in the race for wealth and fame, for he had already passed his twenty-eighth birthday.

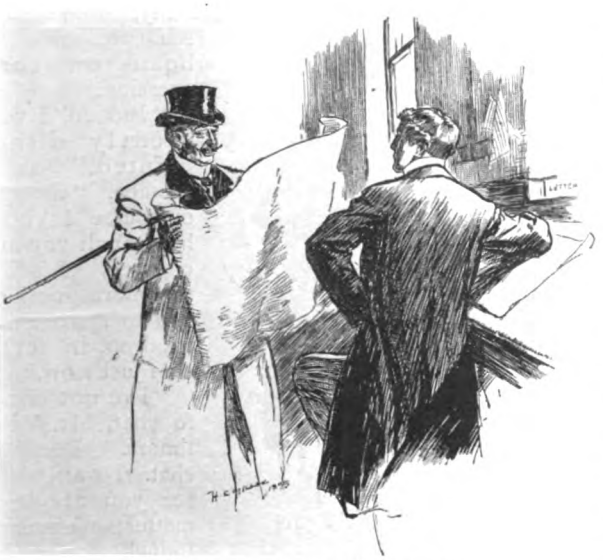
If Miss Sylvia Futvoye had indeed felt attracted towards him at one time it was not altogether incomprehensible. Horace Ventimore was not a model of manly beauty—models of manly beauty are rare out of novels, and seldom interesting in them; but his clear-cut, clean-shaven face possessed a certain distinction, and if there were faint satirical lines about the mouth, they were redeemed by the expression of the grey-blue eyes,

which were remarkably frank and pleasant. He was well made, and tall enough to escape all danger of being described as short; fair-haired and pale, without being unhealthily pallid, in complexion, and he gave the impression of being a man who took life as it came, and whose sense of humour would serve as a lining for most clouds that might darken his horizon.

There was a rap at the door which communicated with Beevor's office, and Beevor himself, a florid, thick-set man, with small side-whiskers, burst in.

"I say, Ventimore, you didn't run off with the plans for that house I'm building at Larchmere, did you? Because—ah, I see you're looking over them. Sorry to deprive you, but——"

"Thanks, old fellow, take them, by all means. I've seen all I wanted to see."



"SORRY TO DEPRIVE YOU, BUT——"

"Well, I'm just off to Larchmere now. Want to be there to check the quantities, and there's my other house at Fittlesdon. I must go on afterwards and set it out, so I shall probably be away some days. I'm taking Harrison down, too. You won't be wanting him, eh?"

Ventimore laughed. "I can manage to do nothing without a clerk to help me. Your necessity is greater than mine. Here are the plans."

"I'm rather pleased with 'em myself, you know," said Beevor; "that roof ought to look well, eh? Good idea of mine lightening the slate with that ornamental tile-work along the top. You saw I put in one of your windows with just a trifling addition. I was almost inclined to keep both gables alike, as you suggested, but it struck me a little variety—one red brick and the other 'parged'—would be more out of the way."

"Oh, much," agreed Ventimore, knowing that to disagree was useless.

"Not, mind you," continued Beevor, "that I believe in going in for too much originality in domestic architecture. The average client no more wants an original house than he wants an original hat; he wants something he won't feel a fool in. I've often thought, old man, that perhaps the reason why you haven't got on——you don't mind my speaking candidly, do you?"

"Not a bit," said Ventimore, cheerfully. "Candour's the cement of friendship. Dab it on."

"Well, I was only going to say that you do yourself no good by all those confoundedly unconventional ideas of yours. If you had your chance to-morrow, it's my belief you'd throw it away by insisting on some fantastic fad or other."

"These speculations are a trifle premature, considering that there doesn't seem the remotest prospect of my ever getting a chance at all."

"I got mine before I'd set up six months," said Beevor. "The great thing, however," he went on, with a flavour of personal application, "is to know how to use it when it *does* come. Well, I must be off if I mean to catch that one o'clock from Waterloo. You'll see to anything that may come in for me while I'm away, won't you, and let me know? Oh, by the way, the quantity surveyor has just sent in the quantities for that schoolroom at Woodford — do you mind running through them and seeing they're right? And there's the specification for the new wing at Tusculum Lodge—you might draft that some time when you've nothing else to do. You'll find all the papers on my desk. Thanks awfully, old chap."

And Beevor hurried back to his own room, where for the next few minutes he could be heard bustling Harrison, the clerk, to make haste; then a hansom was whistled for, there were footsteps down the old stairs, the sounds of a departing vehicle on the uneven stones, and after that silence and solitude.

It was not in Nature to avoid feeling a little envious. Beevor had work to do in the world: even if it chiefly consisted in profaning sylvan retreats by smug or pretentious villas, it was still work which entitled him to consideration and respect in the eyes of all right-minded persons.

And nobody believed in Horace; as yet he had never known the satisfaction of seeing the work of his brain realized in stone and brick and mortar; no building stood anywhere to bear testimony to his existence and capability long after he himself should have passed away.

It was not a profitable train of thought, and, to escape from it, he went into Beevor's room and fetched the documents he had mentioned—at least they would keep him occupied until it was time to go to his club and lunch. He had no sooner settled down to his calculations, however, when he heard a shuffling step on the landing, followed by a knock at Beevor's office-door. "More work for Beevor," he thought; "what luck the fellow has! I'd better go in and explain that he's just left town on business."

But on entering the adjoining room he heard the knocking repeated—this time at his own door; and hastening back to put an end to this somewhat undignified form of hide-and-seek, he discovered that this visitor at least was legitimately his, and was, in fact, no other than Professor Anthony Futvoye himself.

The Professor was standing in the doorway peering short-sightedly through his convex glasses, his head protruded from his loosely-fitting great-coat with an irresistible suggestion of an inquiring tortoise. To Horace his appearance was more welcome than that of the wealthiest client—for why should Sylvia's father take the trouble to pay him this visit unless he still wished to continue the acquaintanceship? It might even be that he was the bearer of some message or invitation.

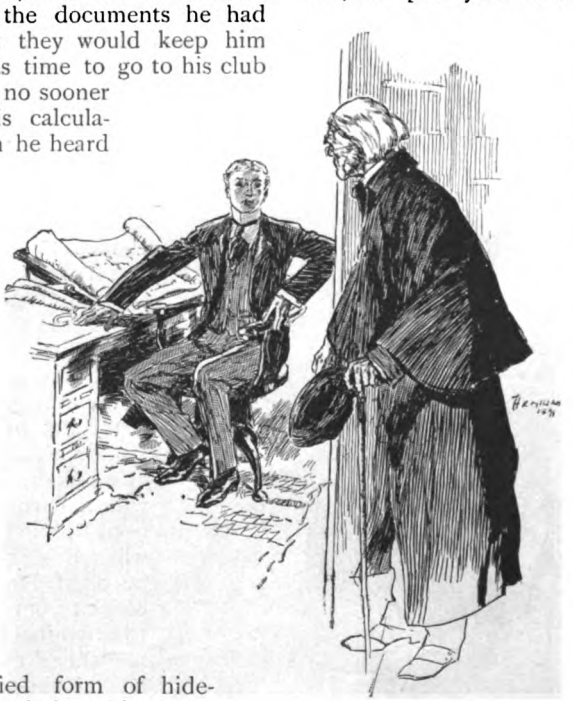
So, although to an impartial eye the Professor might not seem the kind of elderly gentleman whose society would produce any wild degree of exhilaration, Horace was unfeignedly delighted to see him.

"Extremely kind of you to come and see me like this, sir," he said, warmly, after establishing him in the solitary arm-chair, reserved for hypothetical clients.

"Not at all. I'm afraid your visit to Cottesmore Gardens some time ago was somewhat of a disappointment."

"A disappointment?" echoed Horace, at a loss to know what was coming next.

"I refer to the fact—which possibly, however, escaped your notice"—explained the Professor, scratching his scanty patch of grizzled whisker with a touch of irascibility, "that I myself was not at home on that occasion."



"THE PROFESSOR WAS STANDING IN THE DOORWAY."

"Indeed, I was greatly disappointed," said Horace, "though of course I know how much you are engaged. It's all the more good of you to spare time to drop in for a chat just now."

"I've not come to chat, Mr. Ventimore. I never chat. I wanted to see you about a matter which I thought you might be so obliging as to——But I observe you are busy—probably too busy to attend to such a small affair."

It was clear enough now; the Professor was going to build, and had decided—could it be at Sylvia's suggestion?—to intrust the work to him! But he contrived to subdue any self-betraying eagerness, and reply (as he could with perfect truth) that he had nothing on hand just then which he could not lay aside, and that if the Professor would let him know what he required, he could take it up at once.

"So much the better," said the Professor;

"so much the better. Both my wife and daughter declared that it was making far too great a demand upon your good nature; but, as I told them, 'I am much mistaken,' I said, 'if Mr. Ventimore's practice is so extensive that he cannot leave it for one afternoon——'"

Evidently it was not a house. Could he be needed to escort them somewhere that afternoon? Even that was more than he had hoped for a few minutes since. He hastened to repeat that he was perfectly free that afternoon.

"In that case," said the Professor, beginning to fumble in all his pockets—was he searching for a note in Sylvia's hand? "In that case, you will be conferring a real favour on me if you can make it convenient to attend a sale at Hammond's Auction Rooms in Covent Garden, and just bid for one or two articles on my behalf."

Whatever disappointment Ventimore felt, it may be said to his credit that he allowed no sign of it to appear. "Of course I'll go, with pleasure," he said, "if I can be of any use."

"I knew I shouldn't come to you in vain," said the Professor. "I remembered your wonderful good nature, sir, in accompanying my wife and daughter on all sorts of expeditions in the blazing hot weather we had at St. Luc—when you might have remained quietly at the hotel with me. Not that I should trouble you now, only I have to lunch at the Oriental Club, and I've an appointment afterwards to examine and report on a recently-discussed inscribed cylinder for the Museum, which will fully occupy the rest of the afternoon, so that it's physically impossible for me to go to Hammond's myself, and I strongly object to employing a broker when I can avoid it. Where did I put that catalogue? . . . . Ah, here it is. This was sent to me by the executors of my old friend, General Collingham, who died the other day. I met him at Nakada when I was out excavating some years ago. He was something of a collector in his way, though he knew very little about it, and, of course, was taken in right and left. Most of his things are downright rubbish, but there are just a few lots that are worth securing, at a reasonable figure, by someone who knew what he was about."

"But, my dear Professor," remonstrated Horace, not relishing this responsibility, "I'm afraid I'm as likely as not to pick up some of the rubbish. I've no special knowledge of Oriental curios."

"At St. Luc," said the Professor, "you impressed me as having, for an amateur, an exceptionally accurate and comprehensive acquaintance with Egyptian and Arabian art from the earliest period." (If this were so, Horace could only feel with shame what a fearful humbug he must have been.) "However, I've no wish to lay too heavy a burden on you, and, as you will see from this catalogue, I have ticked off the lots in which I am chiefly interested, and made a note of the limit to which I am prepared to bid, so you'll have no difficulty."

"Very well," said Horace, "I'll go straight to Covent Garden, and slip out and get some lunch later on."

"Well, perhaps, if you don't mind. The lots I have marked seem to come on at rather frequent intervals, but don't let that consideration deter you from getting your lunch, and if you *should* miss anything by not being on the spot, why, it's of no consequence, though I don't say it mightn't be a pity. In any case, you won't forget to mark what each lot fetches, and perhaps you wouldn't mind dropping me a line when you return the catalogue—or stay, could you look in some time after dinner this evening, and let me know how you got on?—that would be better."

Horace thought it would be decidedly better, and undertook to call and render an account of his stewardship that evening. There remained the question of a deposit, should one or more of the lots be knocked down to him; and, as he was obliged to own that he had not so much as ten pounds about him at that particular moment, the Professor extracted a note for that amount from his case, and handed it to him with the air of a benevolent person relieving a deserving object. "Don't exceed my limits," he said, "for I can't afford more just now; and mind you give Hammond your own name, not mine. If the dealers get to know I'm after the things, they'll run you up. And now, I don't think I need detain you any longer, especially as time is running on. I'm sure I can trust you to do the best you can for me. Till this evening, then."

A few minutes later Horace was driving up to Covent Garden behind the best-looking horse he could pick out.

The Professor might have required from him rather more than was strictly justified by their acquaintanceship, and taken his acquiescence too much as a matter of course—but what of that? After all, he was Sylvia's parent.

"Even with *my* luck," he was thinking, "I

"'DON'T EXCEED MY LIMITS,' HE SAID."

ought to succeed in getting at least one or two of the lots he's marked; and if I can only please him, something may come of it."

And in this sanguine mood Horace entered Messrs. Hammond's well-known auction rooms.

CHAPTER II.

A CHEAP LOT.

In spite of the fact that it was the luncheon hour when Ventimore reached Hammond's Auction Rooms, he found the big, skylighted gallery where the sale of the furniture and effects of the late General Collingham was proceeding crowded to a degree which showed that the deceased officer had some reputation as a *connoisseur*.

The narrow green baize tables below the auctioneer's rostrum were occupied by professional dealers, one or two of them women, who sat, paper and pencil in hand, with much the same air of apparent apathy and real vigilance that may be noticed in the Casino at Monte Carlo. Around them stood a decorous and businesslike crowd, mostly dealers, of various types. On a magisterial-looking bench sat the auctioneer, conducting the sale with a judicial impartiality and dignity which forbade him, even in his most laudatory comments, the faintest accent of enthusiasm.

The October sunshine, striking through the glazed roof, re-gilded the tarnished gas-stars, and suffused the dusty atmosphere with palest gold. But somehow the utter absence of excitement in the crowd, the calm, methodical tone of the auctioneer, and the occasional mournful cry of "Lot here, gentlemen!" from the porter when any article was too large to move, all served to depress Ventimore's usually mercurial spirits.

For all Horace knew, the collection as a whole might be of little value, but it very soon became clear that others besides Professor Futvoye had singled out such gems as there were, also that the Professor had considerably under-rated the prices they were likely to fetch.

Ventimore made his bids with all possible discretion, but time after time he found the competition for some perforated mosque lantern, engraved ewer, or ancient porcelain tile so great that his limit was soon reached, and his sole consolation was that the article eventually changed hands for sums which were very nearly double the Professor's estimate.

Several dealers and brokers, despairing of a bargain that day, left, murmuring profanities; most of those who remained ceased to take a serious interest in the proceedings, and consoled themselves with cheap witticisms at every favourable occasion.

The sale dragged slowly on, and, what with continual disappointment and want of food, Horace began to feel so weary that he was glad, as the crowd thinned, to get a seat at one of the green baize tables, by which time the skylights had already changed from livid grey to slate colour in the deepening dusk.

A couple of meek Burmese Buddhas had just been put up, and bore the indignity of being knocked down for nine-and-sixpence the pair with a dreamy, inscrutable simper; Horace only waited for the final lot marked by the Professor—an old Persian copper-bowl, inlaid with silver and engraved round the rim with an inscription from Hafiz.

The limit to which he was authorized to go was two pounds ten; but, so desperately anxious was Ventimore not to return empty-handed, that he had made up his mind to bid an extra sovereign if necessary, and say nothing about it.

However, the bowl was put up, and the bidding soon rose to three pounds ten, four pounds, four pounds ten, five pounds, five guineas, for which last sum it was acquired by a bearded man on Horace's right, who immediately began to regard his purchase with a more indulgent eye.

Ventimore had done his best, and failed;

there was no reason now why he should stay a moment longer—and yet he sat on, from sheer fatigue and disinclination to move.

"Now we come to lot 254, gentlemen," he heard the auctioneer saying, mechanically: "a capital Egyptian mummy case in fine con—— no, I beg pardon, I'm wrong. This is an article which by some mistake has been omitted from the catalogue, though it ought to have been in it. Everything on sale to-day, gentlemen, belonged to the late General Collingham. We'll call this No. 253a. Antique brass bottle. Very curious."

One of the porters carried the bottle in between the tables, and set it down before the dealers at the farther end with a tired nonchalance.

It was an old, squat, pot-bellied vessel about 2ft. high, with a long, thick neck, the mouth of which was closed by a sort of metal stopper or cap; there was no visible decoration on its sides, which were rough and pitted by some incrustation that had formed on them, and been partially scraped off. As a piece of *bric-à-brac* it certainly possessed few attractions, and there was a marked tendency to "guy" it among the more frivolous brethren.

"What do you call this, sir?" inquired one of the auctioneer, with the manner of a cheeky boy trying to get a rise out of his form-master. "Is it as 'unique' as the others?"

"You're as well able to judge as I am," was the guarded reply. "Anyone can see for himself it's not modern rubbish."

"Make a pretty little ornament for the mantelpiece!" remarked a wag.

"Is the top made to unscrew, or what, sir?" asked a third. "Seems fixed on pretty tight."

"I can't say. Probably it has not been removed for some time."

"It's a goodish weight," said the chief humorist, after handling it. "What's inside of it, sir—sardines?"

"I don't represent it as having anything inside it," said the auctioneer. "If you want to know my opinion, I think there's money in it."

"'Ow much?"

"Don't misunderstand me, gentlemen. When I say I consider there's money in it, I'm not alluding to its contents. I've no reason to believe that it contains anything. I'm merely suggesting the thing itself may be worth more than it looks."

"Ah, it might be *that* without 'urting itself!"

"Well, well, don't let us waste time. Look upon it as a pure speculation, and make me an offer for it, some of you. Come."

"Tuppence-'ap'ny!" cried the comic man, affecting to brace himself for a mighty effort.

"Pray be serious, gentlemen. We want to get on, you know. Anything to make a start. Five shillings? It's not the value of the metal, but I'll take the bid. Six. Look at it well. It's not an article you come across every day of your lives."

The bottle was still being passed round with disrespectful raps and slaps, and it had now come to Ventimore's right-hand neighbour, who scrutinized it carefully, but made no bid.

"That's all *right*, you know," he whispered in Horace's ear. "That's good stuff, that is. If I was you, I'd *'ave* that."

"Seven shillings—eight—nine bid for it over there in the corner," said the auctioneer.

"If you think it's so good, why don't you have it yourself?" Horace asked his neighbour.

"Me? Oh, well, it ain't exactly in my line, and getting this last lot pretty near cleaned me out. I've done for to-day, I 'ave. All the same, it is a curiosity; dunno as I've seen a brass vawse just that shape before, and it's genuine old, though all these fellers are too ignorant to know the value of it. So I don't mind giving you the tip."

Horace rose, the better to examine the top. As far as he could make out in the flickering light of one of the gas-stars, which the auctioneer had just ordered to be lit, there were half-erased scratches and triangular marks on the cap that might possibly be an inscription. If so, might there not be the means here of regaining the Professor's favour, which he felt that, as it was, he should probably forfeit, justly or not, by his ill-success?

He could hardly spend the Professor's money on it, since it was not in the catalogue, and he had no authority to bid for it, but he had a few shillings of his own to spare. Why not bid for it on his own account as long as he could afford to do so? If he were outbid, as usual, it would not particularly matter.

"Thirteen shillings," the auctioneer was saying, in his dispassionate tones. Horace caught his eye, and slightly raised his catalogue, while another man nodded at the same time. "Fourteen in two places." Horace raised his catalogue again—"I won't go beyond fifteen," he thought.

"Fifteen. It's *against* you, sir. Any advance on fifteen? Sixteen—this very

quaint old Oriental bottle going for only sixteen shillings."

"After all," thought Horace, "I don't mind anything under a pound for it." And he bid seventeen shillings. "Eighteen," cried his rival, a short, cheery, cherub-faced little dealer, whose neighbours adjured him to "sit quiet like a good little boy and not waste his pocket-money."

"Nineteen!" said Horace. "Pound!" answered the cherubic man.

"A pound only bid for this grand brass vessel," said the auctioneer, indifferently. "All done at a pound?"

Horace thought another shilling or two would not ruin him, and nodded.

"A guinea. For the last time. You'll *lose* it, sir," said the auctioneer to the little man.

"Go on, Tommy. Don't you be beat. Spring another bob on it, Tommy," his friends advised him ironically, but Tommy shook his head, with the air of a man who knows when to draw the line. "One guinea—and that's not half its value! Gentleman on my left," said the auctioneer, more in sorrow than in anger—and the brass bottle became Ventimore's property.

"THE BRASS BOTTLE BECAME VENTIMORE'S PROPERTY."

He paid for it, and, since he could hardly walk home nursing a large metal bottle without attracting an inconvenient amount of attention, directed that it should be sent to his lodgings at Vincent Square.

But when he was out in the fresh air, walking westward to his club, he found himself wondering more and more what could have possessed him to throw away a guinea—when he had few enough for legitimate expenses—on an article of such exceedingly problematical value.

CHAPTER III.

AN UNEXPECTED OPENING.

VENTIMORE made his way to Cottesmore Gardens that evening in a highly inconsistent, not to say chaotic, state of mind. The thought that he would presently see Sylvia again made his blood course quicker, while he was fully determined to say no more to her than civility demanded.

At one moment he was blessing Professor Futvoye for his happy thought in making use of him; at another he was bitterly recognising that it would have been better for his peace of mind if he had been left alone. Sylvia and her mother had no desire to see more of him; if they had, they would have asked him to come before this. No doubt they would tolerate him now for the Professor's sake; but who would not rather be ignored than tolerated?

The more often he saw Sylvia the more she would make his heart ache with vain longing—whereas he was getting almost reconciled to her indifference; he would very soon be cured if he didn't see her.

Why *should* he see her? He need not go in at all. He had merely to leave the catalogue with his compliments, and the Professor would learn all he wanted to know.

On second thoughts he must go in—if only to return the bank-note. But he would ask to see the Professor in private. Most probably he would not be invited to join his wife and daughter, but if he were, he could make some excuse. They might think it a little odd—a little discourteous, perhaps; but they would be too relieved to care much about that.

When he got to Cottesmore Gardens, and was actually at the door of the Futvoyes' house, one of the neatest and demurest in that retired and intensely respectable thoroughfare, he began to feel a craven hope that the Professor might be out, in which case he need only leave the catalogue and write a letter when he got home, reporting his non-success at the sale, and returning the note.

And, as it happened, the Professor *was* out, and Horace was not so glad as he thought he should be. The maid told him that the ladies were in the drawing-room, and seemed to take it for granted that he was coming in, so he had himself announced. He would not stay long—just long enough to explain his business there, and make it clear that he had no wish to force his acquaintance upon them. He found Mrs. Futvoye in the farther part of the pretty double drawing-room, writing letters, and Sylvia, more dazzlingly fair than ever in some sort of gauzy black frock with a heliotrope sash and a bunch of Parma violets on her breast, was comfortably established with a book in the front room, and seemed surprised, if not resentful, at having to disturb herself.

"I must apologize," he began, with an involuntary stiffness, "for calling at this very unceremonious time; but the fact is, the Professor——"

"I know all about it," interrupted Mrs. Futvoye, brusquely, while her shrewd, light-grey eyes took him in with a cool stare that was humorously observant without being aggressive. "We heard how shamefully my husband abused your good-nature. Really, it was too bad of him to ask a busy man like you to put aside his work and go and spend a whole day at that stupid auction!"

"Oh, I'd nothing particular to do. I can't call myself a busy man—unfortunately," said Horace, with that frankness which scorns to conceal what other people know perfectly well already.

"Ah, well, it's very nice of you to make light of it—but he ought not to have done it—after so short an acquaintance, too. And to make it worse, he has had to go out unexpectedly this evening, but he'll be back before very long, if you don't mind waiting."

"There's really no need to wait," said Horace, "because this catalogue will tell him everything, and, as the particular things he wanted went for much more than he thought, I wasn't able to get any of them."

"I'm sure I'm very glad of it," said Mrs. Futvoye, "for his study is crammed with odds and ends as it is, and I don't want the whole house to look like a museum or an antiquity shop. I'd all the trouble in the world to persuade him that a great gaudy gilded mummy-case was not quite the thing for a drawing-room. But, please sit down, Mr. Ventimore."

"Thanks," stammered Horace, "but—

"'I MUST APOLOGIZE,' HE BEGAN."

but I mustn't stay. If you will tell the Professor how sorry I was to miss him, and —and give him back this note which he left with me to cover any deposit, I—I won't interrupt you any longer."

He was, as a rule, imperturbable in most social emergencies, but just now he was seized with a wild desire to escape, which, to his infinite mortification, made him behave like a shy schoolboy.

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Futvoye; "I am sure my husband would be most annoyed if we didn't keep you till he came."

"I really ought to go," he declared, wistfully enough.

"We mustn't tease Mr. Ventimore to stay, mother, when he so evidently wants to go," said Sylvia, cruelly.

"Well, I won't detain you—at least, not long. I wonder if you would mind posting a letter for me as you pass the pillar-box? I've almost finished it, and it ought to go to-night, and my maid Jessie has such a bad cold I really don't like sending her out with it."

It would have been impossible to refuse to stay after that—even if he had wished. It would only be for a few minutes. Sylvia might spare him that much of her time. He should not trouble her again. So Mrs. Futvoye went back to her bureau, and Sylvia and he were practically alone.

She had taken a seat not far from his, and made a few constrained remarks, obviously out of sheer civility. He returned mechanical replies, with a dreary wonder whether this could really be the girl who had talked to him with such charming friendliness and confidence only a few weeks ago in Normandy.

And the worst of it was, she was looking more bewitching than ever; her slim arms gleaming through the black lace of her sleeves, and the gold threads in her soft masses of chestnut hair sparkling in the light of the shaded lamp behind her. The slight contraction of her eyebrows and the mutinous downward curve of her mouth seemed expressive of boredom.

"What a dreadfully long time mamma is over that letter!" she said, at last. "I think I'd better go and hurry her up."

"Please don't—unless you are particularly anxious to get rid of me."

"I thought you seemed particularly anxious to escape," she said, coldly. "And, as a family, we have certainly taken up quite enough of your time for one day."

"That is not the way you used to talk at St. Luc!" he said.

"At St. Luc? Perhaps not. But in London everything is so different, you see."

"Very different."

"When one meets people abroad who—who seem at all inclined to be sociable," she continued, "one is so apt to think them pleasanter than they really are. Then one meets them again, and—and wonders what one ever saw to like in them. And it's no use pretending one feels the same, because they generally understand sooner or later. Don't you find that?"

"I do, indeed," he said, wincing, "though I don't know what I've done to deserve that you should tell me so!"

"Oh, I was not blaming you. You have been most angelic. I can't think how papa could have expected you to take all that trouble for him—still, you did, though you must have simply hated it."

"But, good heavens! don't you know I should be only too delighted to be of the least service to him—or to any of you?"

"You looked anything but delighted when you came in just now—you looked as if your one idea was to get it over as soon as you could. You know perfectly well you're longing now for mother to finish her letter and set you free. Do you really think I can't see that?"

"If all that is true, or partly true," said Horace, "can't you guess why?"

"I guessed how it was when you called here first that afternoon. Mamma had asked you to, and you thought you might as well be civil; perhaps you really did think it would be pleasant to see us again—but it wasn't the same thing. Oh, I saw it in your face directly—you became conventional and distant and horrid, and it made me horrid too; and you went away determined that you wouldn't see any more of us than you could help. That's why I was so furious when I heard that papa had been to see you, and with such an object."

All this was so near the truth, and yet missed it with such perverse ingenuity, that Horace felt bound to put himself right.

"Perhaps I ought to leave things as they are," he said, "but I can't. It's no earthly use, I know; but may I tell you why it really was painful to me to meet you again? I thought *you* were changed, that you wished to forget, and wished me to forget—only I can't—that we had been friends for a short time. And though I never blamed you—it was natural enough—it hit me pretty hard—so hard that I didn't feel anxious to repeat the experience."

"Did it hit you hard?" said Sylvia, softly. "Perhaps I minded too, just a very little. However," she added, with a sudden smile, that made two enchanting dimples in her cheeks, "it only shows how much more sensible it is to have things out. *Now* perhaps you won't persist in keeping away from us?"

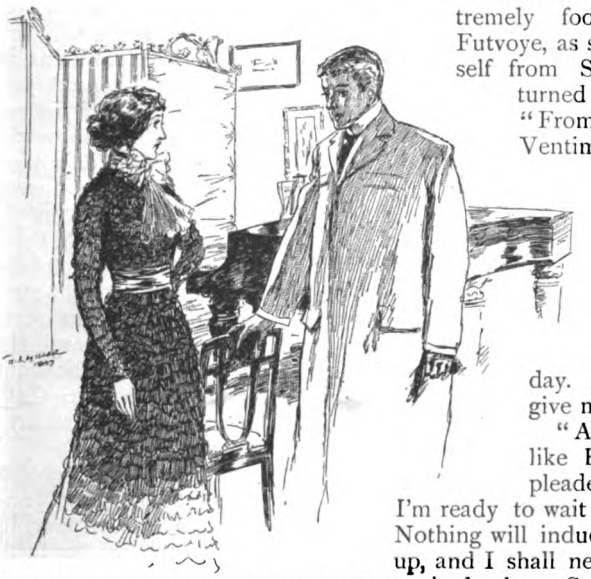
"I believe," said Horace, gloomily, still determined not to let any direct avowal pass his lips, "it would be best that I *should* keep away."

Her half-closed eyes shone through their long lashes; the violets on her breast rose and fell. "I don't think I understand," she said, in a tone that was both hurt and offended.

There is a pleasure in yielding to some temptations that more than compensates for the pain of any previous resistance. Come what might, he was not going to be misunderstood any longer.

"If I must tell you," he said, "I've fallen desperately, hopelessly, in love with you. Now you know the reason."

"It doesn't seem a very good reason for wanting to go away and never see me again. *Does* it?"



"I QUITE UNDERSTAND HOW HOPELESS IT IS."

"Not when I've no right to speak to you of love?"

"But you've done that!"

"I know," he said, penitently; "I couldn't help it. But I never meant to. It slipped out. I quite understand how hopeless it is."

"Of course, if you are so sure as all that, you are quite right not to try."

"Sylvia! You can't mean that—that you do care, after all?"

"Didn't you really see?" she said, with a low, happy laugh. "How stupid of you! And how dear!"

He caught her hand, which she allowed to rest contentedly in his. "Oh, Sylvia! Then you do—you do! But, my God, what a selfish brute I am! For we can't marry. It may be years before I can ask you to come to me. Your father and mother wouldn't hear of your being engaged to me."

"*Need* they hear of it just yet, Horace?"

"Yes, they must. I should feel a cur if I didn't tell your mother, at all events."

"Then you sha'n't feel a cur, for we'll go and tell her together." And Sylvia rose and went into the farther room, and put her arms round her mother's neck. "Mother, darling," she said, in a half whisper, "it's really all your fault for writing such very long letters, but—but—we don't exactly know how we came to do it—but Horace and I have got engaged somehow. You aren't *very* angry, are you?"

"I think you're both extremely foolish," said Mrs. Futvoye, as she extricated herself from Sylvia's arms and turned to face Horace. "From all I hear, Mr. Ventimore, you're not in a position to marry at present."

"Unfortunately, no," said Horace; "I'm making nothing as yet. But my chance must come some day. I don't ask you to give me Sylvia till then."

"And you know you like Horace, mother!" pleaded Sylvia. "And I'm ready to wait for him, any time. Nothing will induce me to give him up, and I shall never, never care for anybody else. So you see you may just as well give us your consent!"

"I'm afraid I've been to blame," said Mrs. Futvoye. "I ought to have foreseen this at St. Luc. Sylvia is our only child, Mr. Ventimore, and I would far rather see her happily married than making what is called a 'grand match.' Still, this really does seem *rather* hopeless. I am quite sure her father would never approve of it. Indeed, it must not be mentioned to him—he would only be irritated."

"So long as you are not against us," said Horace, "you won't forbid me to see her?"

"I believe I ought to," said Mrs. Futvoye; "but I don't object to your coming here occasionally, as an ordinary visitor. Only understand this—until you can prove to my husband's satisfaction that you are able to support Sylvia in the manner she has been

"YOU AREN'T VERY ANGRY, ARE YOU?"

accustomed to, there must be no formal engagement. I think I am entitled to ask *that* of you."

She was so clearly within her rights, and so much more indulgent than Horace had expected—for he had always considered her an unsentimental and rather worldly woman—that he accepted her conditions almost gratefully. After all, it was enough for him that Sylvia returned his love, and that he should be allowed to see her from time to time.

"It's rather a pity," said Sylvia, meditatively, a little later, when her mother had gone back to her letter-writing, and she and Horace were discussing the future; "it's rather a pity that you didn't manage to get *something* at that sale. It might have helped you with papa."

"Well, I did get something, on my own account," he said, "though I don't know whether it is likely to do me any good with your father." And he told her how he had come to acquire the brass bottle.

"And you actually gave a guinea for it?" said Sylvia, "when you could probably get exactly the same thing, only better, at Liberty's for about seven-and-sixpence! Nothing of that sort has any charms for papa, unless it's dirty and dingy and centuries old."

"This looks all that. I only bought it because, though it wasn't down on the catalogue, I had a fancy that it might interest the Professor."

"Oh!" cried Sylvia, clasping her pretty hands, "if only it does, Horace! If it turns out to be tremendously rare and valuable! I do believe dad would be so delighted that he'd consent to anything. Ah, that's his step outside . . . . he's letting himself in. Now, mind you don't forget to tell him about that bottle."

The Professor did not seem in the sweetest of humours as he entered the drawing-room. "Sorry I was obliged to be from home, and there was nobody but my wife and daughter here to entertain you. But I am glad you stayed—yes, I'm rather glad you stayed."

"So am I, sir," said Horace, and proceeded to give his account of the sale, which did not serve to improve the Professor's temper. He thrust out his under lip at certain items in the catalogue. "I wish I'd gone myself," he said; "that bowl, a really fine example of sixteenth century Persian work, going for only five guineas! I'd willingly have given ten for it. There, there, I thought I could have depended on you to use your judgment better than that."

"If you remember, sir, you strictly limited me to the sums you marked."

"Nothing of the sort," said the Professor, testily; "my marginal notes were merely intended as indications, no more. You might have known that if you had secured one of the things at any price I should have approved."

Horace had no grounds for knowing anything of the kind, and much reason for believing the contrary, but he saw no use in arguing the matter further, and merely said he was sorry to have misunderstood.

"No doubt the fault was mine," said the Professor, in a tone that implied the opposite. "Still, making every allowance for inexperience in these matters, I should have thought it impossible for anyone to spend a whole day bidding at a place like Hammond's without even securing a single article."

"But, dad," put in Sylvia, "Mr. Ventimore did get *one* thing—on his own account. It's a brass bottle, not down in the catalogue, but he thinks it may be worth something perhaps. And he'd very much like to have your opinion."

"Tchah!" said the Professor. "Some modern bazaar work, most probably. He'd better have kept his money. What was this bottle of yours like, now, eh?"

Horace described it. "H'm. Seems to be what the Arabs call a 'kum-kum,' probably

used as a sprinkler, or to hold rose-water. Hundreds of 'em about," commented the Professor, crustily.

"It had a lid, riveted or soldered on," said Horace; "the general shape was something like this . . ." And he made a rapid sketch from memory, which the Professor took reluctantly, and then adjusted his glasses with some increase of interest.

"Ha — the form is antique, certainly. And the top hermetically fastened, eh? That looks as if it might contain something."

"You don't think it has a genie inside, like the sealed jar the fisherman found in the Arabian Nights?" cried Sylvia. "What fun if it had!"

"By genie, I presume you mean a *Jinnee*, which is the more correct and scholarly term," said the Professor. "Female, *Jinneeyeh*, and plural, *Jinn*. No, I do *not* contemplate that as a probable contingency. But it is not quite impossible that a vessel closed as Mr. Ventimore describes may have been designed as a receptacle for papyri or other records of archæological interest, which may be still in preservation. I should recommend you, sir, to use the greatest precaution in removing the lid — don't expose the documents, if any, too suddenly to the outer air, and it would be better if you did not handle them yourself. I shall be rather curious to hear whether it really does contain anything, and if so, what."

"'I WISH I'D GONE MYSELF,' HE SAID."

"I will open it as carefully as possible," said Horace, "and whatever it may contain, you may rely upon my letting you know at once."

He left shortly afterwards, encouraged by the radiant trust in Sylvia's eyes, and thrilled by the secret pressure of her hand at parting.

He had been amply repaid for all the hours he had spent in the close sale-room. His luck had turned at last: he was going to succeed; he felt it in the air, as if he were already fanned by Fortune's pinions.

Still thinking of Sylvia, he let himself into the semi-detached old-fashioned house on the north side of Vincent Square, where he had lodged for some years. It was nearly twelve o'clock, and his landlady, Mrs. Rapkin, and her husband had already gone to bed.

Ventimore went up to his sitting-room, a comfortable apartment with two long windows opening on to a trellised veranda and balcony, a room which, as he had furnished and decorated it himself to suit his own tastes, had none of the depressing ugliness of typical lodgings.

It was quite dark, for the season was too mild for a fire, and he had to grope for the matches before he could light his lamp. After he had done so and turned up the wicks, the first object he saw was the bulbous, long-necked jar which he had bought that afternoon, and which now stood on the stained boards near the mantelpiece. It had been delivered with unusual promptitude.

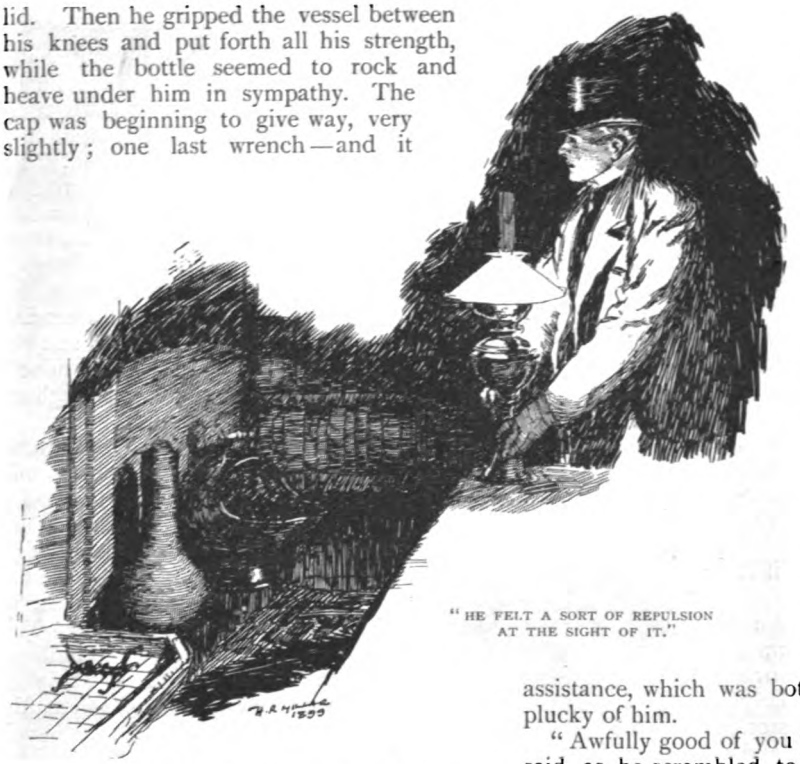
Somehow he felt a sort of repulsion at the sight of it. "It's a beastlier looking object than I thought," he said to himself, disgustedly. "A chimney-pot would be about as decorative and appropriate in my room. What a thundering ass I was to waste a guinea on it! I wonder if there really *is* anything inside it. It is so infernally ugly that it *ought* to be useful. The Professor seemed to fancy it might hold documents, and he ought to know. Anyway, I'll find out before I turn in."

He grasped it by its long, thick neck, and tried to twist the cap off—but it remained firm, which was not surprising, seeing that it was thickly coated with a lava-like crust.

"I must get some of that off first, and then try again," he decided, and after foraging downstairs, he returned with a hammer and chisel, with which he chipped away the crust till the line of the cap was revealed, and an uncouth metal knob that seemed to be a catch.

This he tapped sharply for some time, and again attempted to wrench off the

lid. Then he gripped the vessel between his knees and put forth all his strength, while the bottle seemed to rock and heave under him in sympathy. The cap was beginning to give way, very slightly; one last wrench—and it came off in his hand with such suddenness that he was flung violently backwards, and hit the back of his head smartly against an angle of the wainscot.



"HE FELT A SORT OF REPULSION AT THE SIGHT OF IT."

He had a vague impression of the bottle lying on its side, with dense volumes of hissing, black smoke pouring out of its mouth and towering up in a gigantic column to the ceiling; he was conscious, too, of a pungent and peculiarly overpowering perfume. "I've got hold of some sort of infernal machine," he thought, "and I shall be all over the square in less than a second!" And, just as he arrived at this cheerful conclusion, he lost consciousness altogether.

He could not have been unconscious for more than a few seconds, for when he opened his eyes the room was still thick with smoke, through which he dimly discerned the figure of a stranger, who seemed of abnormal and almost colossal height. But this must have been an optical illusion caused by the magnifying effects of the smoke; for, as it cleared, his visitor proved to be of no more than ordinary stature. He was elderly, and, indeed, venerable of appearance, and wore an Eastern robe and headdress of a dark-green hue. He stood there with uplifted hands, uttering something in a loud tone and a language unknown to Horace.

Ventimore, being still somewhat dazed, felt no surprise at seeing him. Mrs. Rapkin must have let her second floor at last—to some Oriental. He would have preferred an Englishman as a fellow-lodger, but this foreigner must have noticed the smoke and rushed in to offer assistance, which was both neighbourly and plucky of him.

"Awfully good of you to come in, sir," he said, as he scrambled to his feet. "I don't know what's happened exactly, but there's no harm done. I'm only a trifle shaken, that's all. By the way, I suppose you can speak English?"

"Assuredly I can speak so as to be understood by all whom I address," answered the stranger. "Dost thou not understand my speech?"

"Perfectly, now," said Horace. "But you made a remark just now which I didn't follow—would you mind repeating it?"

"I said: 'Repentance, O Prophet of God! I will not return to the like conduct ever.'"

"Ah," said Horace. "I daresay you *were* rather startled. So was I when I opened that bottle."

"Tell me—was it indeed thy hand that removed the seal, O young man of kindness and good works?"

"I certainly did open it," said Ventimore, "though I don't know where the kindness comes in—for I've no notion what was inside the thing."

"*I* was inside it," said the stranger, calmly.

(To be continued.)

Where British Sailors Learn to Shoot.

By E. A. Brayley Hodgetts.

CAPTAIN PERCY SCOTT.
From a Photo. by G. West & Son, Southsea.

THE war in the Transvaal has once more demonstrated the handiness of Jack Tar; the public will therefore be interested in hearing all about the place where British sailors learn how to "shoot straight."

There are many mud-banks in Portsmouth Harbour—one of these is called Whale Island. It was when Captain Percy Scott, who now commands the *Terrible* to such purpose in South Africa, and who devised the means for moving the big naval guns to the front, was commander of the *Excellent* that Whale Island definitely ceased to be a mud-bank.

The *Excellent* was commissioned in 1833, by Sir Thomas Hastings, as a gunnery school for the Navy, and such it has remained through these many years with varying fortunes. Sometimes it was the *Queen Charlotte*, sometimes the *Illustrious*, or the *Calcutta*, upon whom the name and mantle of the old *Excellent* descended; now it is a reclaimed mud-bank.

The original object of the annexation was to provide a convenient drill-ground and a shooting-range for the new patterns of long-distance guns. It was not until 1883 that Whale Island was converted into the barracks which it is now. Difficult of access, the place is approached to-day by the average civilian from a neighbourhood of interminable red-brick two-story houses, poor but scrupulously clean. No mud-bank greets the eye. Convict labour has altered all that, and where formerly there was nothing but a humble mud hut, there are now handsome buildings, a beautiful green lawn, a gravelled parade ground, trees, a battery, and neatness and orderliness everywhere. To judge by the appearance of the officers and men, the salubrity of the place is unquestionable. The earth thrown up by harbour and dockyard excavations has been thrown upon the mud, which had previously received a bed of concrete, and by means of piles and ballast a fine and firm piece of land has been literally created, having an area of about seventy acres. Upon this splendid site, surrounded as it is by water, have been erected a battery, officers' quarters, men's quarters, a gymnasium and museum, a drill-hall, and innumerable other buildings, all retaining their nautical nomenclature. Here and on board the *Cambridge* the officers and men of the British Navy receive their instruction in gunnery. The sub-lieutenants from the adjoining Naval College come here to learn their drill and hear lectures.

In order to see Whale Island and get "on board" her, we must be ferried across. At the guard-house we are met by a sentry and a petty officer, who takes our card and gives it to a messenger to carry it to the

WHALE ISLAND—THE OFFICERS' QUARTERS.
From a Photo. by Dr. Strickland, of H.M.S. "Excellent."

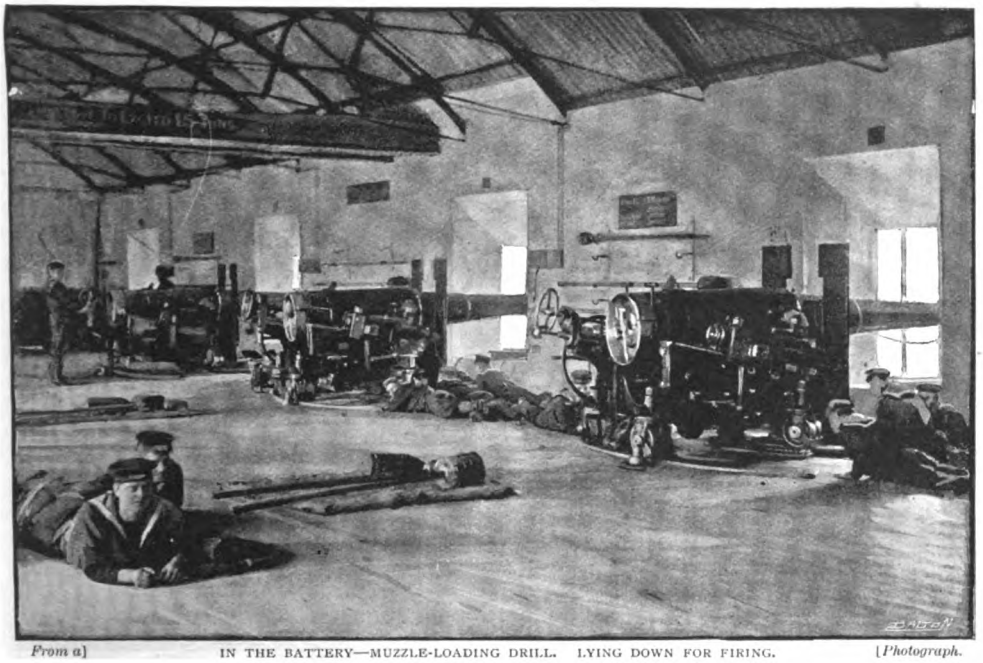
commander. We are then conducted to the quarter-deck, which is an enormous space paved with flag-stones beautifully white in front of a large building containing the museum, the gymnasium, and the lecture-hall. It is surmounted by a clock-tower. Here is the marine sentry, and another marine, the bugler; here is the ship's bell, and here the men are inspected before going "on shore." We are practically standing on one side of a huge quadrangle. In front of us lies a soft, green lawn, large, level, and beautiful—suggestive of lawn tennis and happiness; to our right is the handsome façade of the officers' quarters, with the figure-head of the old *Queen Charlotte*, one of the many *Excellents*, over the entrance. Facing us, and nearly half a mile distant, is a long, low building—this is the battery. To our left is the drill-hall, with a large, gravelled parade-ground between it and the lawn. In the distance, in the extreme left corner of the island, we can just descry certain forbidding-looking iron structures—these are cranes for the hoisting of big guns; and everywhere are the merry faces, magnificent shoulders, and supple, lithe figures of our jolly tars, rushing to and fro on some errand or other. Now and then we get a glimpse of a toy railway bringing more earth to add to what we see, for the expansion of Whale Island, like that of England itself, is still going on; and so we can also descry occasionally parties of dejected individuals in parti-coloured clothes, attended by armed men. These are the convicts who are doing time, and whose criminal propensities have brought them, against their inclination, to the performance of a great and useful service to their country.

Presently, the first lieutenant brings us before the captain, who introduces us to the commander, and now our tale of wonder begins. The genial commander takes us in hand and shows us everything of interest on the island.

Of course, the first thing to see is the battery. This is fitted to reproduce the conditions obtaining on board ship as much as possible. The guns are pointed at port-holes, through which we get glimpses of the harbour. The ship is supposed to be going twelve knots an hour. When we entered, the men were still at their gun drill, and a splendid sight it was to see that interminable row of guns tended by these active fellows, who were jumping about training them. It seemed absurd to expect poor,

From a Photo. by] THE BATTERY. *[Dr. Strickland.*

mortal man to direct and control these monsters, but still it looked very easy when it was done. By turning a wheel or moving a pivot, these enormous engines of destruction could be guided and manipulated with as much ease as a toy cannon. Here are guns of every description, all the patterns in use in the Navy being of necessity represented; even some of the old-fashioned muzzle-loaders are not wanting, for several of our ships, unfortunately, still carry them, and the men must know how to use them. As new patterns supersede old ones, the new guns are introduced, but the old ones are not displaced until they have been entirely abolished in the Service generally. There are about thirty odd guns in the battery, including machine guns, quick-firing guns, hydraulic worked guns (both turret and barbette), and 4in., 5in., 6in., and 9·2in. breechloaders. This last is the biggest gun here, and is such a size that the imagination refuses to grasp the

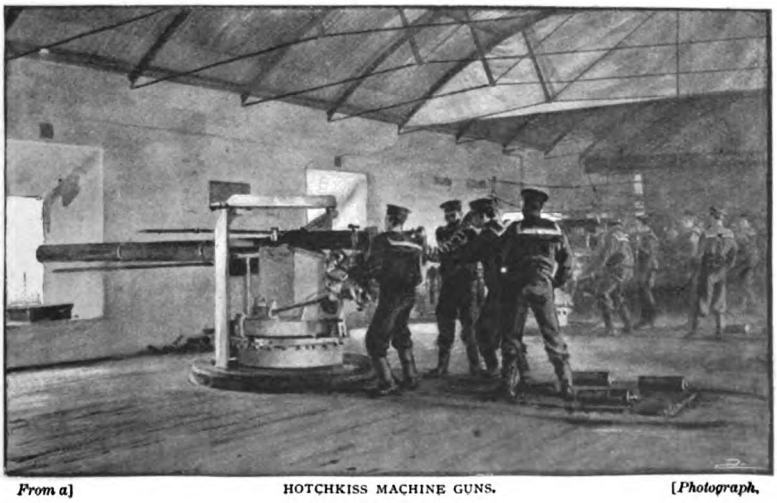


From a] IN THE BATTERY—MUZZLE-LOADING DRILL. LYING DOWN FOR FIRING. *[Photograph.*

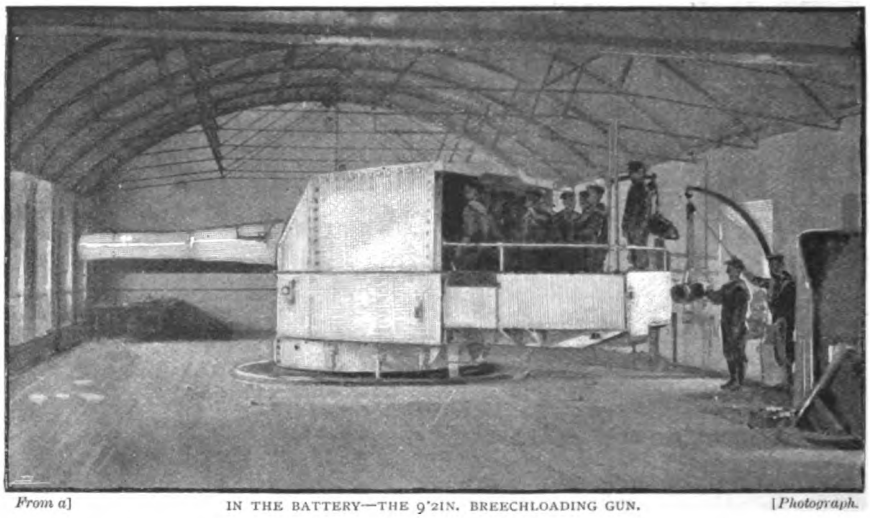
possibility of a 111-ton gun, for this one is only 22 tons. It is fitted for drawing-room practice, as the commander pleasantly explained, for a rifle-tube has been placed in it, which in turn holds an aiming-tube, so that this roaring lion among guns has been made as gentle as a cooing dove. It has a remarkable target, consisting of the silhouette of a man-o'-war about a foot long, so as to give the effect of distance; this is mounted at a distance of about 30yds., upon a series of concealed eccentric rollers — a string is pulled, and the model works, and rolls about and pitches just as though it were at sea. The model is also used for night practice, when electrically illuminated sights are used. The little ironclad is then fired at, under circumstances so realistic that the only difference between the mimic and the actual warfare is that in the latter case the shot should weigh 600lb., when as in the former it does not weigh more than a quarter of an ounce.

When this target was shown the German Emperor upon his last visit to Whale Island—for he often has a look round—he was told that the model was supposed to be a French ironclad, whereupon His Majesty is reported to have replied: "I am glad it is a French ship."

But the favourite gun is the serviceable 4·7 quick-firing gun, which fires a shot weighing 45lb., and requires a cartridge of 12lb. weight. This is a very respectable round,



From a] HOTCHKISS MACHINE GUNS. *[Photograph.*



From a] IN THE BATTERY—THE 9·2IN. BREECHLOADING GUN. *[Photograph.*

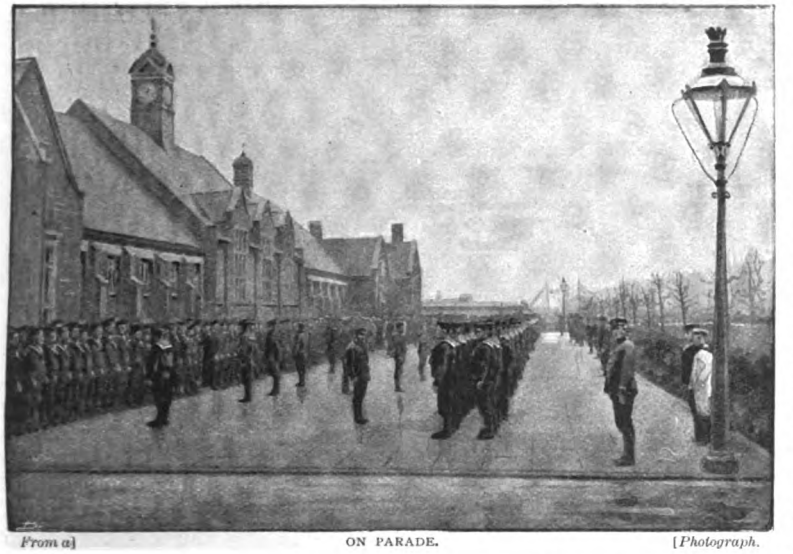
and quite serious enough for most purposes. Nearly all our cruisers carry this handy little weapon. Big as the battery is—it has a length of 600ft.—the authorities propose erecting a continuation for the quick-firing and machine guns only.

Near the parade-ground, where, when it is fine, the men go through infantry and machine and field gun drill, and cutlass and rifle practice, there is a small machine-gun battery which consists of two guns placed on movable platforms, which are worked by a winch to produce a rolling motion. The target is also movable, so that here all the conditions of actuality are reproduced. In bad weather the men are drilled in the drill-hall. They turn out splendidly, and their military bearing on parade is perfect.

We now retrace our steps to the handsome building in which are the officers' quarters: the mess-room, smoking and billiard rooms, etc. The mess-room is sometimes used as a ballroom, for life on board Whale Island, although not all beer and skittles, has many amenities. Then we find there is a racket-court, as fine as that at Prince's Club, in the vicinity of the mess-room. We also learn that occasionally rinking parties are given on the white deal plank deck of the battery. On these occasions the beauties of Southsea disport themselves gaily among the deadly engines of warfare, and the susceptible hearts of the careless young officers often find the bright fire of a pair of eyes more dangerous than the steady old guns. The sportsman officer, who disdains soft dalliance and thirsts for nobler sport than rackets, can vent his murderous propensities on pigeons. One end of the island is a sort of Hurlingham, where pigeon-shooting matches take place from time to time, and prizes are contested for. Tennis parties are also given on the lawn.

From all this it will be seen that, so far as the officers are concerned, at least, the island is not unlike an admirably appointed social club, with just a few routine duties thrown in

From a] FIELD-GUN DRILL. *[Photograph.*

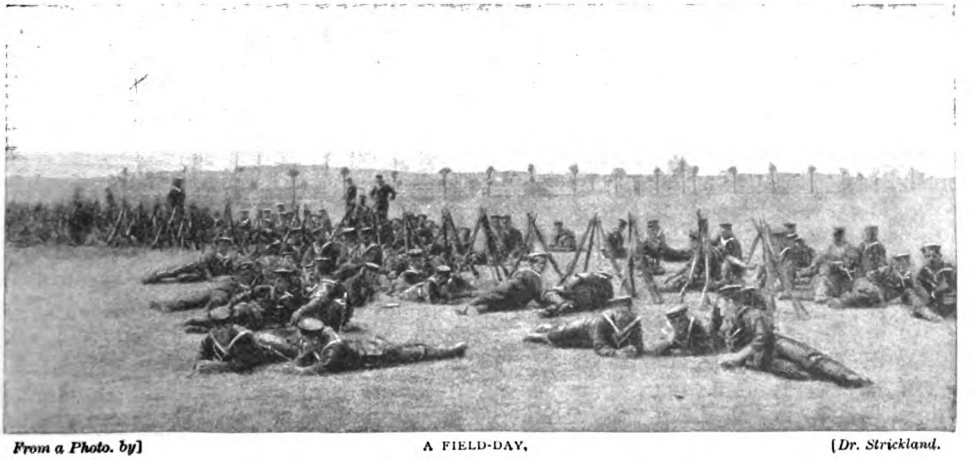


From a] ON PARADE. *[Photograph.*

to vary the tedium of endless amusement. I fancy the officers themselves take a less optimistic view of their life, but we all know that it is the privilege of Englishmen to grumble.

Let us see what sort of a lot falls to poor Jack. Poor Jack's sweet little cherub, who sits up aloft, has looked after his life on Whale Island with more than its ordinary care. Behind the officers' quarters are those of the men ; they consist of eight blocks of buildings, each composed of four long rooms, in which from twenty-five to thirty men are comfortably accommodated. The cleanliness and neatness of these dormitories are beyond description. The walls and ceilings are whitewashed, the floors are laid with canvas, and there is a beautifully clean deal table in the centre where the men mess. They do not sleep in hammocks, but iron bedsteads ; they have plenty of blankets, and lots of room for their kit. Behind the dormitories are the bathrooms, with hot and cold water, the hairdressing establishment, where there are machine-brushes and every luxury, and the washhouses. It is amusing to see Jack doing his own washing, and scrubbing away like a laundrymaid. But sailors have to do everything for themselves, and so they are encouraged to make their own clothes, and they do them much better than the contractor. Jack, unlike his brother in arms, Tommy Atkins, gets no outfit from his country, but provides his own clothes, his pay being in proportion, and hence there is a store-room on the island where he can get his clothes ; but if he should prefer to buy his materials and make his clothes himself, he can do this also, and makes a great saving thereby, for the cloth is sold to him at cost price.

But the glory of Whale Island is its canteen. Just as the officer has all the amenities of a club, so has Jack. Every night there is a smoking concert, and on guest nights the officers invariably come in, and assist in entertaining the men. The room where these entertainments take place



From a Photo. by] A FIELD-DAY. *[Dr. Strickland.*

From a] THE BLUEJACKETS' QUARTERS—DINNER-TIME. *[Photograph.*

is a large hall fitted with little marble-slabbed tables and innumerable chairs. At one end is the platform, upon which stands the piano; near the platform are chairs for the officers, at the other end is the bar. We have heard all the latest popular songs admirably sung from this platform—sometimes by men, sometimes by officers. Jack loves dancing passionately, and in the intervals between the songs it is amusing to see the men take off their shoes, invite each other to a valse or a polka, and solemnly tread the mazy dance as though it were a religious rite. Occasionally, this hall is used for popular lectures, illustrated by the magic lantern.

Over the hall are the club-rooms, billiard-tables, writing and reading rooms, etc. Hard by is a bowling-alley. The canteen is managed, on co-operative principles, by a committee composed of a member of each mess, and presided over by the commander. Everything is sold at what is practically cost price, yet the canteen makes a small profit, which pays for the social amenities provided. In one corner of this building there is even a small electrical workshop.

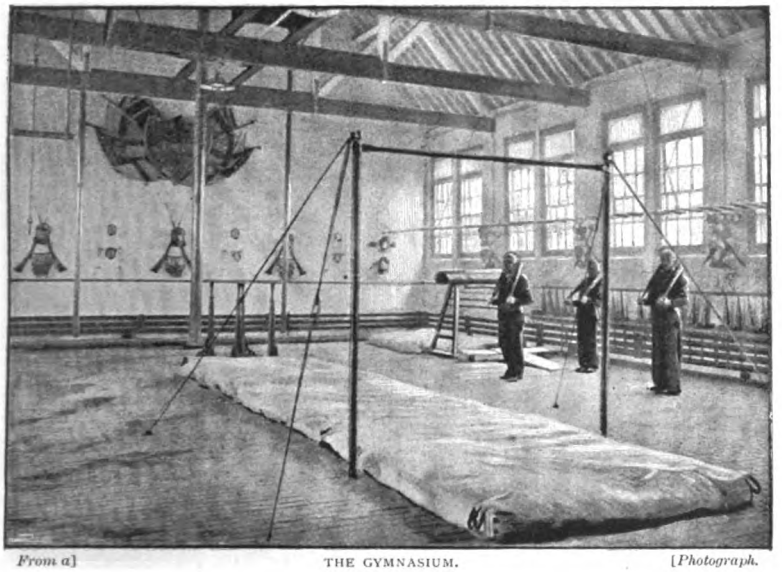
Each mess selects its own cook, who is also the caterer; the rations are all put together; such extras as are wanted are purchased at cost price at the canteen, and the cooking is done in the huge kitchen, called the galley, which contains a range capable of cooking the food of 1,500 men! The galley itself is a picture of neatness, but one is inclined to be sceptical of the culinary attainments of the cooks. A vague notion seems to prevail that these cooks are not entirely disinterested, and, like their prototypes on shore, manage to turn their office to a good account.

From the above description the reader will gather that Jack's life on board Whale Island is not unenviable, nor were we surprised to hear that when the time comes round for him to leave it he does so with regret. The great town of Portsmouth is close by, and the men are allowed to go on shore almost as much as they like, after four o'clock that is, provided they are on duty again at seven in the morning. It is a pleasant, healthy, happy life, and the men look thoroughly jolly and contented.

As is well known, we catch our sailors young and keep them long. In this respect their fate is more enviable than that of Tommy Atkins. There are numerous duties upon which superannuated sailors can be employed, and at Whale Island, for instance, there is a permanent staff of pensioners, who keep the lawn in order and do a quantity of routine work, analogous to that done by pioneers in a garrison.

The training of the men at Whale Island includes: company and battalion drill, fortification and trench exercise, heavy gun drill, breech and muzzle loading, hydraulic-worked guns, machine and field gun drill, and rocket drill, for saving life at sea. They have also to learn all about ammunition, and the different powders and fuses used. They must also pass through a course of heavy gun-firing in the gunboats, and a course of musketry.

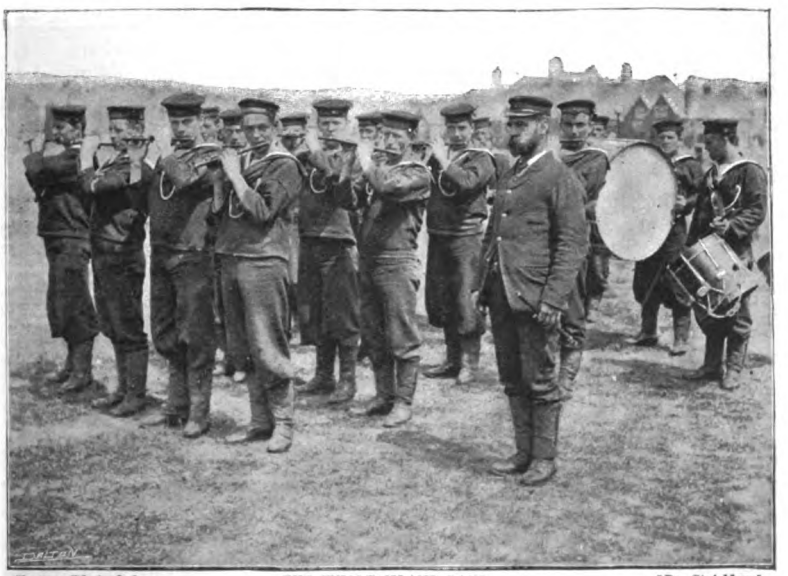
For gun-firing practice the *Excellent* possesses a small fleet of nine gunboats, and an ironclad, the *Hero*. The gunboats go out to practise off Spithead, and the *Hero* makes periodical trips to Portland for target practice. There is also a special course of instruction provided for the armourers, who learn at the dockyard the mysteries of riveting and armour-plating, and are generally fitted to execute any repairs that an ironclad may require at sea.



From a] THE GYMNASIUM. *[Photograph.*

Having left the men's quarters we look in at the museum, lecture-hall, and gymnasium before taking leave of the commander. In the gymnasium we find boxing, fencing, and gymnastics are taught. Here are the trapeze, the horizontal bar, the climbing poles, etc. At the moment when we looked in a party of men were learning musical drill. In the museum are found collections of all those objects the men have to learn about: shots, shells, fuses, cartridges, armour-plates, etc. Of the lecture-hall we need not say much, beyond mentioning that it is well ventilated and comfortably warmed.

We now take leave of the commander and return to Portsmouth. On our way back reflections throng the brain, the impressions obtained form a wild kaleidoscope — everything is mixed up, and we wonder how we shall ever be able to give an account of all that has been seen. One thing, however, impresses itself upon the writer, and that is this: that as Whale Island has justified its existence by the splendid results obtained, why should not a similar plan be adopted with the *Vernon* and the depôt ships the *Victory* and the *Wellington*? Jack's life at sea is none too comfortable; why should he not have his reward on shore? Instead of being cooped up between the decks of badly-ventilated and obsolete men-o'-war, why not accommodate him in roomy barracks? At Walmer already the marines have their barracks; why should the sailors and marines at Portsmouth not be equally well cared for? There is plenty of room and waste land about, and I cannot but think that the adoption of such a plan could only have a beneficial effect upon the health and discipline of the men, and I am, moreover, confirmed in this opinion by the splendid object-lesson of Whale Island. Our Navy is already an extremely popular Service, but that is no reason why we should not try to improve it.



From a Photo. by] THE WHALE ISLAND BAND. *[Dr. Strickland.*

THE FIRE BUGS.

BEING ONE OF THE ADVENTURES OF DRENTON DENN, SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.

By F. M. White.

I.

DRENTON DENN lounged into the editorial sanctum of the *New York Post*, his hands plunged into the pockets of a Norfolk jacket. In one corner of his mouth he wore a green cigar, which he took no trouble to remove. The great man opposite carried a short pipe between his teeth, also he was minus coat and vest. All the same, Peregrine Pryde was a great man, and some day might be President. Meanwhile he preferred to control the destiny of perhaps the smartest paper on earth.

"Halloa, you turned up again?" he remarked.

"Cuba," Denn said, parenthetically. He slanted a dingy straw hat over his left eye. "Got a scare article or two for you. Costly work, though. That last cheque of yours for exes went no way."

"Hang the money, so long as you get the stuff," said Pryde. "I'm glad you've come back, all the same. That your dog?"

Denn nodded, and slightly beamed in the direction of a rough nomadic terrier coiled up near his chair.

"Name's Prince," he explained; "does anything but talk, in which he has the advantage of you and me. Got a job for me, eh?"

"Rather. Wants lot of pluck and daring, but danger is one of your weaknesses. You've heard of the 'Fire Bugs,' of course? No! Well, at any rate, you are aware that the annual number of fires in New York are out of all proportion to those in London, for instance. Rumours have reached me from time to time that there is an organized gang of ruffians, who make it their business to set fire to premises in such a way that the brigade are unable to prevent anything short of total loss. Of course, the game is to insure a bogus stock, and then bleed the insurance companies."

"And I'm to find out whether this is true or not?"

"Oh, it's true enough," Pryde exclaimed. "One of the gang told me all that in this very office. That little bit of information cost our old man five hundred dollars, and cheap at the price."

"Why didn't the chap go to the police?"

"Said the sight of an officer always made him faint," Pryde said, drily. "Besides, there was money in coming here, and revenge, too, because Jacob Reski has quarrelled with the gang and means to expose them—or, rather, he proposes to leave the exposure to us. There's all the material for a big thing here, and I'm putting it in your hands to exploit."

Denn was interested. There was all the material ready for a pretty adventure, to say nothing of rare journalistic *kudos* at the finish. And Denn was always ready to sacrifice his dinner for an adventure. His sheer love of danger made him the pearl of correspondents that he was.

When the *Post* people lent themselves to these classic exposures money was quite a secondary consideration. With his straw hat tilted over his eyes, Denn rapidly thought the matter out.

"I shall have to take the *rôle* of a German Jew trader," he said. "You must set me up in business with a bogus stock and a big insurance. I shall leave you to make it all square with the insurance people. All I ask you to do now is to bring Reski and myself together."

In the course of a day or two the matter was arranged. In the purlieus of New York Denn discovered a Semitic gentleman anxious to return to Germany, and who was only too glad to dispose of his lease and stock for a consideration. The insurance people were naturally ready to fall in with any scheme calculated to put a stop to the progress of the "Fire Bugs." Not only did they issue a heavy policy to Nicholas Mayer—Denn's *nom de guerre*—but they also considerately dated the policy three years back, and gave Denn receipts for all premiums.

Denn deemed it prudent to potter about his newly-obtained premises for a few days before he took any further steps. Business troubled him not at all, for the simple reason that there did not seem to be any. And the sixth evening after dark Jacob Reski appeared.

He was a little man with a glittering, evil eye, and the liquid speech of a born histrion. Within the hour he had imparted to Denn information that caused the latter to long for immediate action.

"I'm afraid I can't assist you any further," Reski concluded. "I'll show you where Moses Part and the rest of the gang make their head-quarters. You'll easily manage it if you know your way about."

Denn hastened to assure the speaker that his bump of locality left nothing to be desired. An hour later, carefully disguised, he found himself seated alone in one of the most evil and unsavoury saloons in the Bowery. Some time elapsed before Denn began to spot his men. They were exceedingly shy and suspicious to begin with, but Denn was an adept at the game, and ere the evening had passed he had convinced them that he was as great a blackguard as anyone there.

It was an evening or two later before Denn dared to come to the point. Moses Part, a picturesque ruffian with one eye, gave him the lead. Altogether the "Fire Bugs" were five in number. Taking them by and large, a more repulsive quintette it would have been hard to imagine.

Denn listened to their exploits with a smile which concealed a longing to whip out a revolver and clear the party on sight. If all they said was true, the insurance companies must have been robbed of millions of dollars. Many fires resulting in serious loss

"PART'S EYE GLEAMED OVER THIS TREASURE."

of life were openly owned to by the ruffians around Denn.

"I've half a mind," he said, hesitatingly, "to get you to grease my little lot."

Moses Part pricked up his ears.

"And what have you got?" he asked, eagerly. "Ach, I knew it was coming. I guessed what you was after the first night you was here."

Denn admitted his store in Tiffany Street. There was practically no stock, though at one time the business had been a flourishing one, which statement Denn concluded with a cocking of his little finger.

"Have you a bolicy?" Part asked, nasally.

"For ten thousand dollars," Denn responded. "A policy three years old and all the premiums paid. You can see it for yourself."

Part's eye gleamed over this treasure. Everything appeared to be perfectly in order. And a policy three years old was a gem rarely handled by the "Fire Bugs."

"Mine friendt," he said, earnestly, "dose dollars was already in our bockets. Half for you and the rest between us. Not dat we trust you altogether, ach no. You assign your stock and bolicy to a friendt of mine first, and then we get to work. I will come to your little place to-morrow after dark and plan out the thing exactly."

II.

DRENTON DENN'S professional instinct led him on to a good thing as surely as a steady hound on the trail. And he was now on one of the biggest "scoops" of his career.

How deep and wide were the ramifications of the "Fire Bugs" the New York authorities never dreamed. That there was something wrong somewhere they were vaguely aware, and more than one insurance corporation writhed uneasy before the spectral dividend. Arson was steadily gaining in popularity, being at the same time remunerative and exceedingly hard to prove. That an organized gang were working the thing scientifically was known only to the select few.

Nor was Drenton Denn aware what a big thing it was until he went carefully into figures. Per head of the population, the New York fires were as four to one compared to London, even with the latter handicapped by the deadly low flash-point, and the loss of life owing to the conflagrations was in a still more startling ratio.

Indeed, the "Fire Bugs" seemed to rather like sacrificing a life or two. It lent realism to the crime and averted suspicion. The more Denn dwelt on the matter, the clearer did he see that he was on the brink of a tragedy calculated to move continents.

With the omnivorous appetite of the Pressman he wanted everything for himself and his paper. The exposure of the doings of the "Fire Bugs" and the hunting down of the gang must be all his own. He knew quite enough now to cause the arrest and conviction of Moses Part and his merry men, but, as to their methods, Denn had yet a great deal to learn.

But that was all coming. In the part of Nicholas Mayer, Denn could see everything when his establishment in Tiffany Street was primed for the destroyer. The assurance policy had been duly assigned, and, this being done, Moses Part set to work at once. Two nights later a cart drove up to 611, Tiffany Street, and deposited certain innocent-looking packages at Denn's ostensible business premises. A little later on Part came along, followed by the rest of the infamous gang. The packages contained a drum or two of petroleum, some scores of yards of thick hay-bands, a few shallow wooden tubs, and a basket or two of corks. Evidently the "Fire Bug" business was an art.

"We'll get to work at once," said Part. "In a couple of hours' time there won't be much left of this crazy old show."

Denn watched the proceedings with the greatest interest. The four men worked silently together as if drilled to the part. There were three floors to the house altogether, and it speedily became evident to Denn that the idea was to set them aflame instantaneously.

In the centre of the shop—or warehouse, rather—situated at the back of the premises, Moses Part placed one of the flat, shallow tubs. Into this one of his confederates proceeded to pour a quantity of petroleum. On the top of the blue spirit he sprinkled corks until the surface was covered.

Then the end of the fluffy hay-band was placed in the tub and dragged across the floor. Into the hay-band naphtha had been rubbed. Like a scaly snake the hay-band was carried up the stairs and twisted in and out of the banisters until the next floor was reached, and here another tub of paraffin, corks and all, was similarly placed as below. Once more the same programme was gone through, until the hay-band ended in a tub of petroleum on the top floor. Around these two latter tanks Part and his men collected

shavings, pieces of paper, cardboard boxes, and the like.

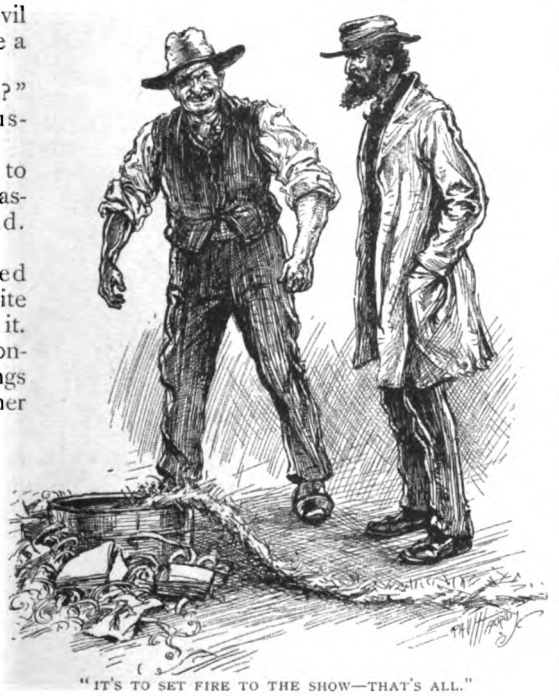
"All done," Part growled. "There's only one more thing now."

Denn looked up at the speaker. His hooked nose was curved over his thick upper lip in a horrible smile. It seemed to Denn that his eyes were aflame with anger. Then Part looked down again, and the evil flame died out like a passing fire.

"What's that?" Denn asked, suspiciously.

"It's to set fire to the show," Part hastened to respond. "That's all."

Denn remarked that he hadn't quite got the hang of it. He was vaguely conscious that things were not altogether right, but as a conscientious journalist he could not afford to neglect detail. The popular voracity for detail he fully understood.



"IT'S TO SET FIRE TO THE SHOW—THAT'S ALL."

"Come down to the basement, and I'll show you," said Part. "What we want to get is a fire in three places at once."

"I think I understand," said Denn.

Again that terrible smile came flashing over Part's face.

"I'm sure you will presently," he muttered. "Leading up to yonder tub is a slow match. This will burn for half an hour before it reaches the petroleum, and give us all a chance to get away in safety. Directly the flame gets to the oil those casks begin to blaze, and the sides of the tub are on fire also. As they burn down the blazing oil runs all over the floor. Meanwhile the hay-band carries the flame rapidly upstairs to the next tub, and so on to the top floor of the house. Within ten minutes there are three roaring fires going on three floors. You see, my friendt?"

"Precisely," Denn responded, not without enthusiasm. "A most ingenious idea! No wonder that your movements are hard to follow."

"And there is nothing else we can tell you?"

Denn looked up suddenly. There was an ominous change in the timbre of Part's voice, a ring that clearly spoke of danger. And it seemed to Denn that the rest of the gang gathered threateningly around him. As he glanced to the door, Part smiled grimly.

"There is nothing else," said Denn.

"So; then you are completely satisfied? Now you know everything of the method of the 'Fire Bugs.' As what you call merely a guarantee of good faith, and not for publication."

"What on earth do you mean by that?"

"Ach! What a question to be asked by *Mr. Drenton Denn!*"

Every muscle in Denn's body drew taut and trembling. He wasted no time in words, for he was essentially a man of action. Almost before Part had ceased to speak, Denn had flown at him like a cat. A small, compact fist, shod with knuckles like steel, caught Part fairly on the point of the jaw, and down he went like an empty sack.

Denn flashed round, and another ruffian dropped sideways before a tremendous blow behind the ear. Denn slipped for the door. As he did so a foot shot out and locked his instep, and Denn staggered and fell. Instantly the other two dropped a-top of him.

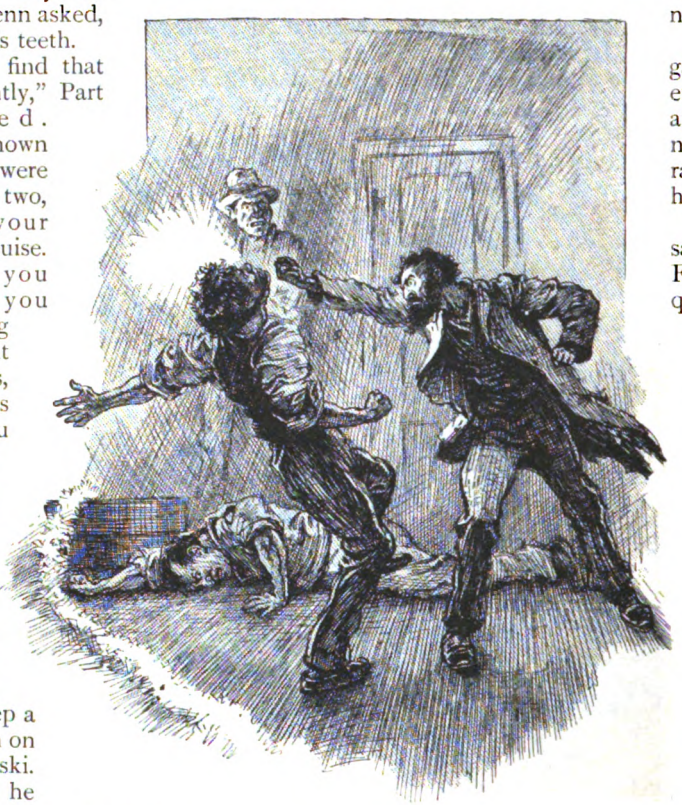
It was a hopeless struggle from the first—a grim silence, broken only by the heavy breathing of three panting bodies, and the whining barking of Denn's dog quivering in a distant corner. Denn fought with all the tenacious courage of despair, till a bash, fairly between the eyes, caused the stars to flash and dazzle, and induced a tendency to drowsiness.

When Denn came to himself again his hands were securely fastened by a thong of raw hide, as also were his feet. Part, with an

ugly grin on his face, and a mat of blood in his beard, was busily engaged in hammering two strong staples into the black, oaken floor.

"What's your game?" Denn asked, between his teeth.

"You'll find that out presently," Part retorted. "We've known who you were for a day or two, for all your clever disguise. And so you thought you were going to find out our secrets, and give us away as you did Dick Daly's boys? Ach, you are a very clever man, but not clever enough to know we should keep a close watch on Jacob Reski. And when he went to your office——"



"DENN FLASHED ROUND, AND ANOTHER RUFFIAN DROPPED SIDEWAYS."

"Enough said," Denn interrupted. "What are these staples for?"

"To fasten you down to the floor. Oh, we are going to give you every opportunity of seeing how it's done. And we are going to wind part of that hay-band round your body so that the fire will pass all round you on its way to the next floor. A bit painful, perhaps, but it's going to be done. And when the house is burnt down and you with it, we shall just go and collect your insurance money, Mr. Denn."

Denn checked a sudden desire to speak. Then he smiled grimly. If he was to be tortured first and burnt alive afterwards, he would die with one satisfaction in his heart. The man who called to collect the insurance money on that assignment would have an unpleasant surprise.

Bitterly Denn cursed his own imprudences. He might just as well have had assistance close to hand in case of accident. But professional pride and jealousy, the desire to do everything off his own bat, had been his undoing. There was no help for it now.

Of fear, Denn gave no sign whatever. Nor was he afraid. The dominating emotion was rage and anger at his own folly.

"Very well," he said, "do your worst. For the present I am quite helpless. I am not afraid of you."

"Oh, you're not that," muttered Part. "Seems a pity to waste so good a man. I only wish I'd got a dozen like you."

III.

DENN offered no opposition to the scoundrels. Such a thing would be futile and childish, and might, moreover, result in a tap on the head that would render him independent of this mundane sphere for all time; whereas, whilst there is life there is hope, and some chain of fate might yet temper the wind. Denn's nature was, above all things, buoyant.

The loose slack of hay-band was twisted round and round him up to the shoulders, so that presently he would be in a zone of seething flame, and utterly powerless to arrest its progress on its errand of destruction. He would have to lie there quivering with the anguish of the diabolical torture until the collapse of the house would bring merciful oblivion.

At the expiration of five minutes Denn was stretched out on the floor taut and rigid, his feet and shoulders extended painfully by the raw-hide straps that were attached to the staples in the floor. His arms were pinned to his sides. There was a touch of the tortures of Tantalus in this. The hope that Denn might get his hands free would only

add to his mental agony. Part regarded his handicraft with grim satisfaction.

"I fancy you'll do now," he said. "If you do manage to escape you'll have something to write about that will do the *Post* good. Quite comfortable?"

Denn's eyes flashed like frosty stars.

"I cannot sufficiently thank you for all this attention," he snapped. "Do you think I am going to show the white feather, you dog? Go and leave me to die like a man. Be off with you."

Part backed away, with a mocking bow.

"Good night," he said. "It's a cold evening, and perhaps I ought to have thrown a rug over you. Now, *do* you think you will be warm enough?"

Denn laughed aloud—he would have been puzzled to say why. In dire peril as he was, the grim humour of the speech was not lost upon him. Then he heard footsteps echoing over the bare floor, and the sullen bang of a door.

A sudden change of mood came over Denn. He tugged at his bands until a chafed crimson outlined his wrists; then he desisted, and burst into a fit of tears. Terrible tears they were—tears of blood, of anger, and not of fear. Denn wept out of sheer passionate impotence. Something warm lapped up the brine from his cheeks. The slobbering, caressing touch soothed Denn strangely, though he would have found it hard to say why. There was some comfort in the unexpected presence of his terrier, but under the circumstances a dog was not altogether an ally in the face of danger.

"How did you get here, Prince?" Denn asked.

The dog whined and quivered from head to foot. His canine intelligence told him that his master was in bad case.

"You are a comfort, certainly," Denn went on, "the same as a chaplain might be to a convict on the morn of his execution. Your presence, Prince, may enable me to retain my senses—always a valuable possession even to a man in extremes like myself. There is just a chance even for me. You are a clever dog, an exceedingly clever dog, Prince, but there are limits to your sagacity. If I could only make you understand the necessity of gnawing away these thongs of mine, all would be well. As it is, you can do nothing for me."

Out of the tail of his eye Denn noticed the sullen red spark of the slow match creeping on towards the tub of paraffin. In the intense silence of the place he could hear the splutter of saltpetre. Surely it must be more than an hour since Part's departure.

The flame crept along like a snail. Denn watched it in a dazed, fascinated kind of way. The slow monotony of it was getting on his nerves. He caught himself almost longing for the flash and the flare which sooner or later must come from the tub.

Then another paroxysm of frenzy shook him to the soul. When the desire to struggle had passed away, Denn was dripping from head to foot. He smiled in bitter mockery of himself. Never had his senses been so preternaturally clear as they were at that present moment.

Taking his master's struggles as part of a game, Prince had commenced to frisk around, barking loudly. Denn's endeavours had caused the hay-band to wriggle slightly, and upon this Prince pounced, shaking it as if it had been a rat. The acrid taste of the paraffin was not pleasing, but Prince went at it again quite angrily.

"Good God!" Denn cried. "The one hope lies there!"

There was a fizz and a flash, and immediately the room was filled with a huge yellow flame. A dense black smoke rose to the ceiling; fatty, smutty flakes fell like black snow. The first tub of petroleum was on fire, and broke the silence with a sullen roar.

Denn grated his teeth together. He saw the end of the hay-band slide from the edge of the tub and lie on the floor. There was just a faint chance that it might not have caught the flame.

But that hope was instantly dissipated. A hissing blue flame came dancing along in Denn's direction. Just for a moment the whole universe reeled around him. The reaction threatened to swamp his senses.

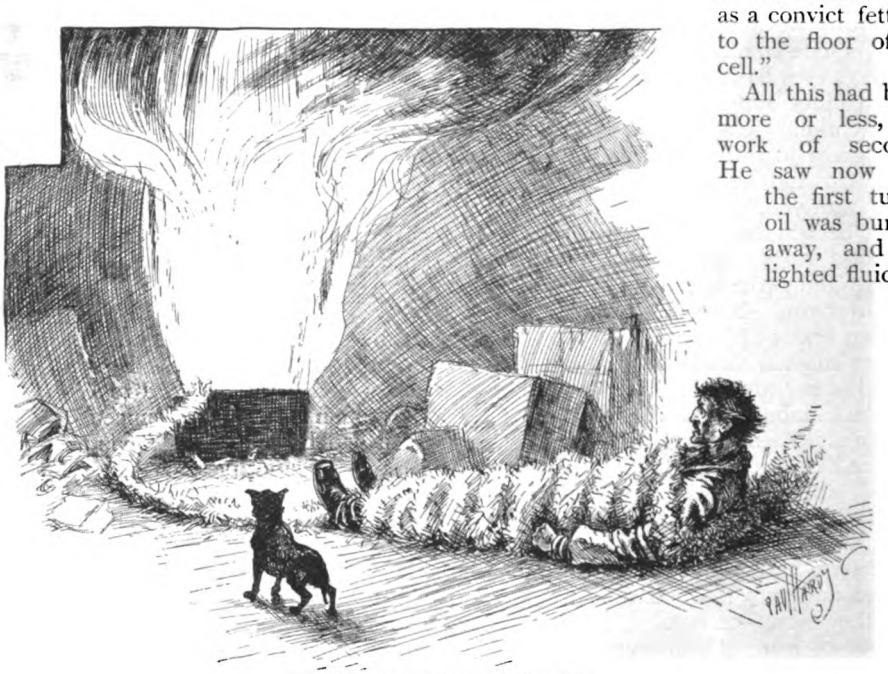
But only for a moment, and then his intense nervous energy returned to him. A buoyant and virile nature like Denn's is not easily crushed out. Hope, hope—there was always hope whilst life lasted.

That he was about to be burnt, and badly burnt, Denn knew perfectly well. The shock might kill him. But though this poor human machinery of ours is easily thrown out of gear, it is surprising what humanity can endure and still draw the breath of life.

Denn could not die; he would not faint. The petroleum still blazed fiercely; the blue popping flame from the corks rose and fell.

The dense cloud of smoke drifted round the room, eventually finding an outlet by means of a window or skylight rather high up

in one corner. Part and his gang knew their business thoroughly, and fully appreciated draught as an aid to their endeavours.



"THERE WAS A FIZZ AND A FLASH."

As the blazing point of flame struck his leg, Denn shivered. Near and round him went the blaze, scorching his clothing and leaving a huge white bladder spirally round his frame.

The agony was intense: so keen, and incisive, that Denn was dripping from head to foot. Still he retained his senses. As the zone of fire rose to his waist he controlled himself by an almost superhuman effort to be still. Then he deliberately held his hands to the blaze. There was a smell of singed leather, and immediately the thongs that bound his wrists gave way. Only the fierce exultation in the knowledge that he had won something kept Denn going.

When his hands were free Denn threw his arms apart. With his hands above his head he had no great difficulty in getting his shoulders free.

Hope spurred him on like generous wine. He had only to rid himself of the green thongs that confined his ankles to the staples, and he would be free. Unfortunately, these bonds had not suffered from the flames. Try as he would, Denn could not rid himself of these. He had no knife in his pocket, and to try to loosen the light, damp knots with fingers like white bladders was impossible.

"Done, after all," Denn groaned. "I'm as fast bound here as a convict fettered to the floor of his cell."

All this had been, more or less, the work of seconds. He saw now that the first tub of oil was burning away, and the lighted fluid was flowing over the hard oak floor. On the other side the hay-band was carrying a red cone of fire towards the staircase.

As it progressed, Prince followed, barking furiously. A sudden idea occurred to Denn: there was just a chance yet.

"Worry, worry," he cried. "Rats, rats; pull him down, Prince!"

The dog barked more furiously than ever. He grasped the hay-band some way beyond the point of flame, and began to tug vigorously. Prince had evidently made up his mind not to be defeated. His sharp teeth mumbled and worried at the rope: there came a sound of something tearing, and then—the band parted!

A terrible, hoarse cry came from Denn's throat. Prince set up and howled. Denn called the dog to him and kissed the shaggy head.

"My lad," he said, hoarsely, "I guess you've about saved my life. You shall have a gold collar set in diamonds and jewelled in sixteen holes. What nonsense I am talking! At any rate, there will be no fire now, since you have cut off the communication. Yonder flowing petroleum won't do much harm upon

the hard oak floor. If you could only worry the thongs off my ankles for me——"

Denn said no more. The floor seemed to rise miles upwards and then fall again, shooting the hapless man down into bottomless space. Ten millions of stars danced before his eyes; there was a roar like the sea in his ears.

The reaction had come, and Denn had fainted. Prince sat there still and silent, his black nose quivering. The small body of the terrier absolutely bristled with excitement and expectation.

IV.

WHEN Denn came to himself it seemed to him vaguely as if several years had elapsed since he had slipped from consciousness. He passed his hand over his chin to feel for his beard, as Rip Van Winkle might. But no beard was there, and no flame was in the room either. The "Fire Bugs" had made a miscalculation so far as the ground floor was concerned, for the paraffin in the tub had burnt away with no greater effect than a deep excoriation of the stout oaken boards. A smell of burnt wood came pungently to Denn's nostrils, but the air was clear of smoke and the danger past.

The pain Denn suffered from his wounds was something dreadful. But nothing could crush down the fierce exultation at his heart, the knowledge that by sheer grit and fortunate chance he had baffled his enemies.

Still, Denn was not out of the wood yet. The thongs about his ankles still held him prisoner to the staple. Had his hands been less swollen and blistered he might have freed himself, but with all his pluck he could grasp nothing whatever, so far as his left hand was concerned. The right was not so badly scorched.

"It's very disheartening," Denn muttered. "Those fellows are not far off, and ere long one or more of them are certain to turn up and investigate into the postponement of the fireworks. Then where shall I be?"

All the same, Denn did not relax his efforts. An hour passed with no very definite results, and then a draught of air proclaimed the fact that the front door had been cautiously opened.

Prince sat up quivering, his ears a-cock, and his teeth displayed in a snarl.

Denn cuffed him gently.

"Down," he whispered, "down, sir. Not a sound."

Prince crouched obediently. Denn lay sideways as if dead. A figure crept in, making no noise, in his india-rubber slippers. He approached Denn and stood over him. The latter never moved.

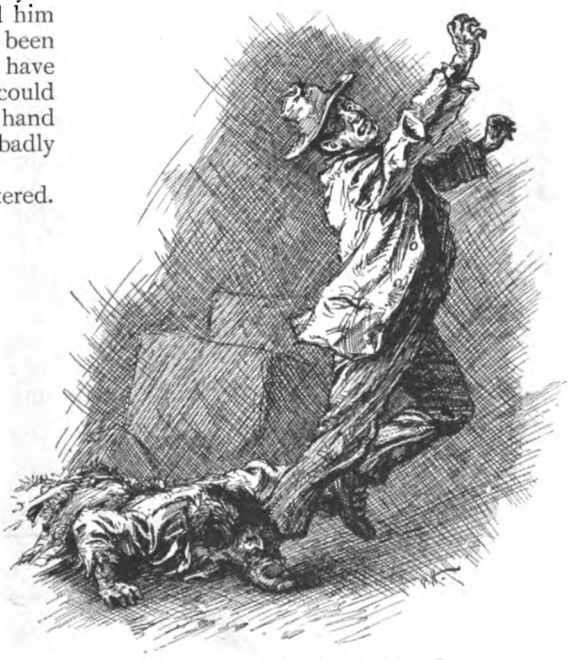
"He's done for," Part, for he it was, chuckled grimly. "The charred remains of the unfortunate proprietor were found mit der ruins! That is what the papers will say. No suspicion after that. I suppose that hay-band must have parted in some way. A match will put that all right. Good-bye, Mr. Drenton Denn."

And Part spurned the prostrate figure with his foot. A fraction of a second later, and a yell of agony rang through the house. The hidden vein of ferocity lying dormant in every man rose in Denn at this moment. There was just one tiny chance of safety, and Denn grasped it. Like lightning, he grabbed Part by the feet and buried his teeth like a dog in the ruffian's tendon Achilles.

With his other foot Part lashed out savagely. Denn caught him by the instep and brought him crashing to the ground. Not for an instant did the tension of those jaws relax on Part's heel.

"Mein Gott, what agony!" Part screamed.

"And it's going to be agony," Denn mumbled, "until you cut the strip that binds my ankles. I've got you at a disadvantage now,



"DENN CAUGHT HIM BY THE INSTEP."

you hound, and I mean to keep it. Out with your knife and do as I tell you."

Trembling with anguish in every limb, Part drew a knife from his pocket. As he was fumbling with the green hide, Denn dexterously managed to extract Part's revolver from his hip-pocket.

Denn's limbs were free at last. Stiff and sore as he was he managed to regain his feet, only to see Part rushing upon him knife in hand. But he was instantly covered with his own revolver.

"Stand back or I fire," Denn cried. "It's my turn now, my friend. You have some matches in your pocket, of course. On the window-ledge you will find some candles. Light one."

Part sullenly obeyed. There was something crisp and metallic in Denn's voice that precluded any debate upon the point. If Part had only known how sick, and dazed, and dizzy Denn was feeling, his discomfiture might have been less. As it was, the ruffian was completely cowed.

"Now take a scrap of paper and a pencil. There's one on the table. Of course, the other ruffians are awaiting your return in the den of the Bowery. Now write what I tell you. Say: 'Something wrong at Nicholas Mayer's. Come to me all of you as soon as you get this!' By heavens, if you don't do as you are told I'll let daylight into you." Part obeyed, sullenly. The letter was folded and addressed to his second in command. Denn opened a window looking on a side street, and hailed the first likely-looking gutter-snipe that passed.

"Do you want to earn a dollar?" he asked.

The arab raised no particular objection, and was sent on his errand. He was simply to deliver the note, and nothing more. A police-officer lounging down the street looked at Denn suspiciously.

"Anything wrong here?" he demanded.

"You've got it first time," Denn responded. "There's something so wrong here that all America will be ringing with it in a day or two. Go on to Patrick Road police-station and send four of your best men here. And for the love of Heaven, lose no time about it."

Ten minutes later four stalwart men were gathered round about Denn and his discomfited companion, listening to the former's tale.

Denn fainted twice during the recital, but he minded that not in the least now. All the same, he had been terribly afraid of this sickness during the time that he had found himself alone with Part.

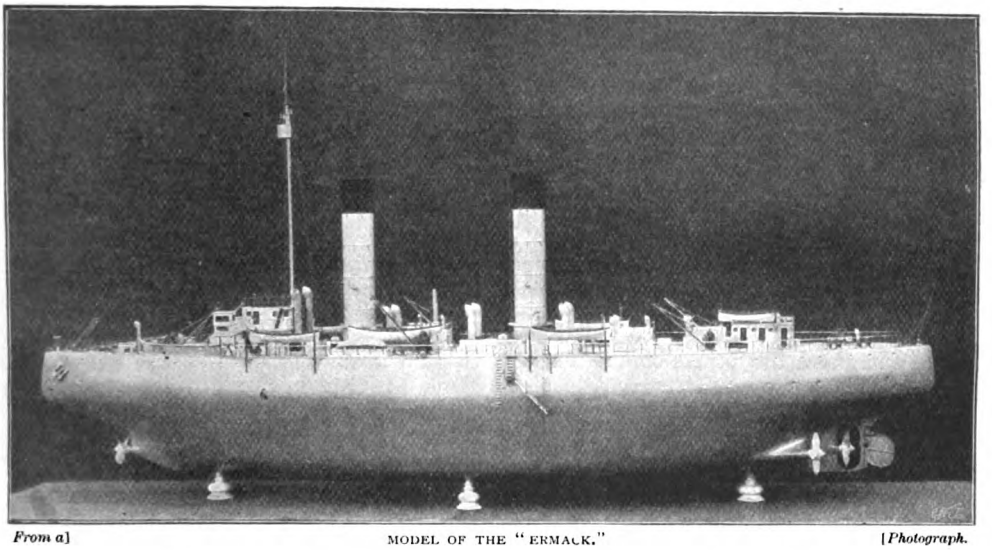
Hardly was the recital finished when Part's satellites came bursting into the house, eager to know what was wrong. Before they could realize the nature of the cruel trap laid for them the whole gang were secured. The chief officer would have grasped Denn eagerly by the hand.

"No, thanks," the latter said, hastily. "I'm not feeling quite up to social amenities of that kind. You have your men and you have your evidence, and when you find that insurance policy, your case will be complete. And you now have the satisfaction of ridding New York of perhaps the cleverest gang of pestiferous scoundrels that ever disgraced civilization. God knows how many innocent lives have been sacrificed to satisfy their greed."

"And meanwhile, Mr. Denn," said the inspector, "you——"

"Will go straight to Barnabas Hospital," Denn said, promptly. "I want a strong tonic to pull me together, and a smart typewriter will do the rest. Once the *Post* is in possession of all these facts, I shall take a rest. And I want you to know that I need it."

The *Post* had it all the next morning, thanks to Denn's pluck and determination. At what time New York was thrilling over these revelations, Denn, with head shaven and temperature up to 103, tossed on his hospital bed babbling of strange things. The "special" was there all the same. And as to the subsequent career of the "Fire Bugs," are they not written in the annals of the New York police, so that he who wills may read?



From a] MODEL OF THE "ERMACK." *[Photograph.*

To the Poles by Ice-Breaking Steamer.

AN INTERVIEW WITH VICE-ADMIRAL MAKAROFF.

BY HERBERT C. FYFE.

"IN my opinion, the best way to penetrate into the Arctic and Antarctic regions is by means of a powerful ice-breaker." These words were spoken to the present writer some few weeks ago by Vice-Admiral Makaroff, of the Imperial Russian Navy, the designer of the ice-breaking steamer *Ermack*, a vessel which may well claim to be the strongest ship in the world.

It was in his room at the Grosvenor Hotel, London, that Admiral Makaroff was so good as to receive me, to tell me all about his trip to Polar waters, and to show me the wonderful series of photos. he took during the cruise of the *Ermack* at work in the ice-fields. There have been, of course, ice-breakers before the *Ermack*, and some of them have done good service in keeping water-ways clear of ice so that vessels may enter and leave northern ports, but none have ever achieved such wonders as has this sturdy ship.

The *Ermack* was designed especially for ice-breaking in the Baltic and Kara seas, for the purpose of keeping open the northern ports of Russia either during the whole winter or for a longer period than they would otherwise be navigable, and the idea of exploring the Polar regions only occurred to Admiral Makaroff after he discovered what the vessel was capable of. It was in the month of July, 1899, that the *Ermack* made her first Polar trip.

"Our voyage," said the Admiral, "differed from those of former explorers, in that we experienced no sufferings or privations, and were never in danger."

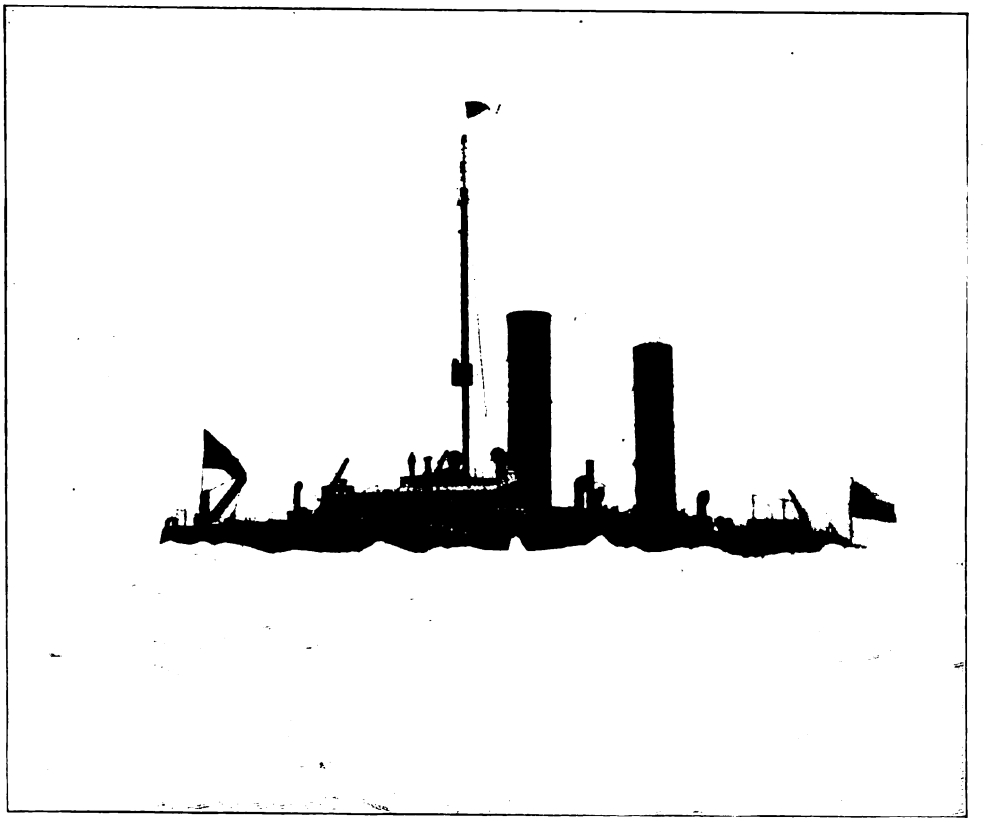
The *Ermack* was brought back to Newcastle-on-Tyne in August. During the five weeks she was away she travelled through 230 miles of Polar ice.

"Nobody before us," said the Admiral, "had ever tried the Polar Sea for ice-breaking, and our going was the first time man had taken offensive action against Polar ice. Though many scientists said the thing could not be done, we did it. Starting from Spitzbergen we found ice in lat. 80deg. 15min., and strong Polar ice it was too. The plain ice was 14ft. thick, and the pack ice (*i.e.*, in mountainous ridges) was sometimes as much as 18ft. high and seven fathoms (42ft.) deep. We found the *Ermack* could break this ice, and she proceeded very well through it. It was wonderful to see the easy way in which it broke in some places when the *Ermack* charged into it. Sometimes it would happen that we struck the weakest part—perhaps a place which had become hollowed out beneath. Yet at other times huge blocks would stick to the vessel, cover her bow, and bend up underneath her; charge into other pieces with us, and break them without leaving us, and in that event we had to steam backwards and get rid of it.

"The summer is the best time for negotiating the ice of the Arctic Ocean, for then,

although the sea is full of ice, it is ice in the shape of islands divided by the canals, which are mostly filled with broken ice. During the progress of the *Ermack* floes of ice over a mile long moved away and gave passage to her In charging 'hummock' or 'pack' ice the bow of the *Ermack* rises up 8ft. or so; the field cracks, and the ship then falls down and goes ahead, moving both sides of the *débris* of the ice-field. It is most exciting to see some of the big pieces of ice fall down into the water and the others coming to the surface from the great depths, every detached piece trying to find a new position, while the ice-breaker herself, always being pushed along gradually, rises, cracks the ice, and falls again. Our usual rate of speed was 3½ knots an hour in Polar regions.

"The islands of the Polar Sea are of different sizes, some being as much as five miles in diameter: the others are smaller, and the great majority of them do not exceed hundreds of feet. Sometimes these islands are pressed against each other, and there are days during which it is difficult to proceed, but with a change of weather and current the ice-islands become separated from each other, so as to render a passage possible. It is not necessary when going with the ice-breaker into the Polar region to keep a straight course and cut the ice; the ship goes in a zig-zag 'line,' shaping her course between the ice-floes. In some cases it was necessary to apply the full power, but in other places the ship proceeded easily. Before I went I spoke on this subject with Captain Sverdrup, of the *Fram*, and Dr. Nansen. Captain Sverdrup is entirely of my opinion, but Dr. Nansen did not wish to express his views. He only said that he wished me success, and he would be the first to congratulate me upon it."



From a] THE "ERMACK" FORCING THROUGH HEAVY DRIFT ICE. *[Photograph.*

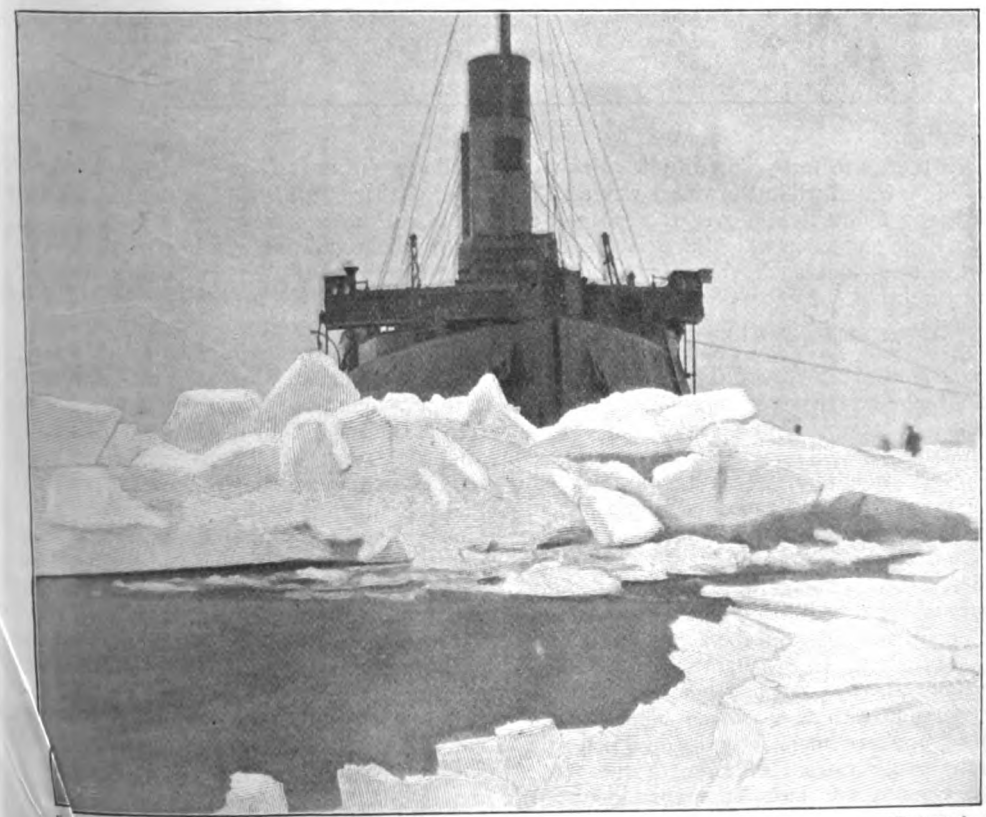
The Gulf of Finland, in the Baltic Sea, is covered with ice during the whole winter, and consequently the navigation and transport of cargo to such an important commercial port as St. Petersburg is interrupted for five months in the year. In a severe winter ice may be found at a distance of 200 miles from St. Petersburg. The ice of the Finnish Gulf

is very strong, because the water of the Baltic has very little salt in it. The thickness of plain ice does not exceed 2ft. in deep places and 3ft. in shallow water, but the winds break the ice and pile it up, and large fields of packed ice 12ft. deep may often be found.

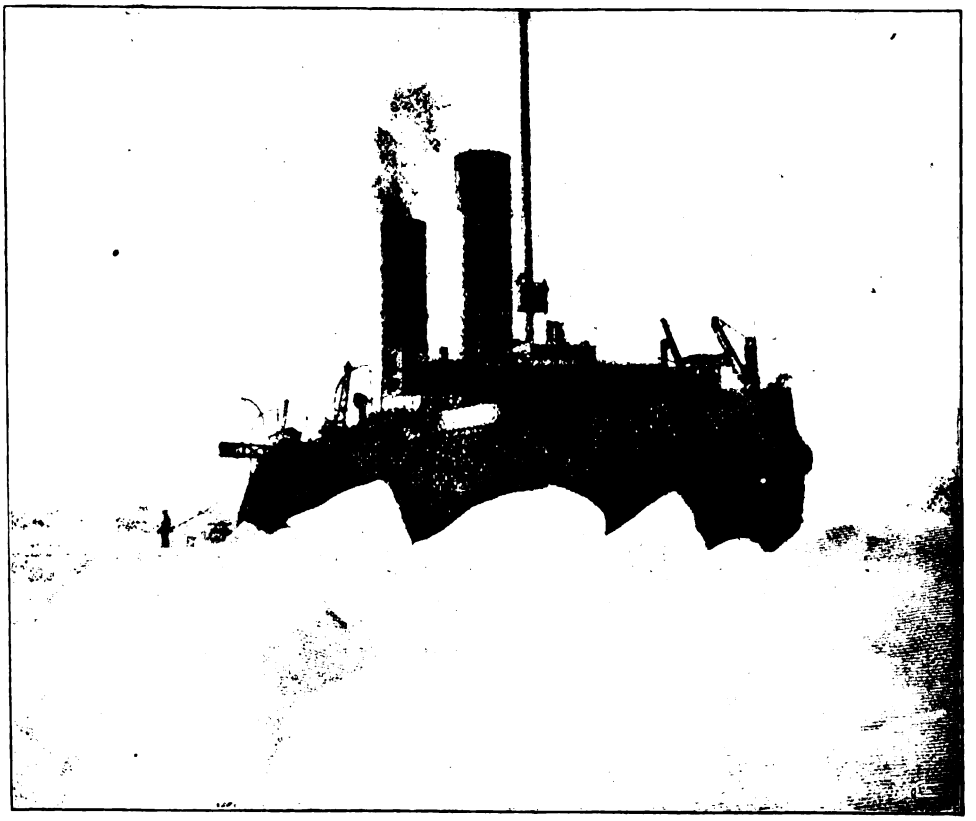
It was to clear a passage through the Baltic ice-fields that the first ice-breaker was built in 1864, by Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth, and Co., from the designs of a Russian merchant, Britneff. His idea was to take one of his steam tugs and cut the fore part into such a shape that it would run on the top of the ice and break it with its own weight. Since then this firm has built several ice-breakers for the River Volga, the Port of Hango, and the Lake of Baikal; but the *Ermack* is the finest thing in this line that they have yet done.

The quadruple screw-steamer *Ermack*, constructed at Walker-on-Tyne, can lay claim to be the heaviest and strongest steamer yet constructed. She is 305ft. long, 71ft. wide, and 42ft. 6in. deep. With 3,000 tons of coal on board, her displacement is 8,000 tons. The hull has been designed to resist the crushing effect of ice. At the stern are three screws, one being on the centre line as in ordinary single-screw vessels, and the other two as in the usual twin-screw arrangement. Forward there is a fourth screw, and this is driven by a shaft projecting through the sloping stem forward. This bow screw is not meant for accentuating the speed of the vessel—for all ship-builders are convinced of the inefficiency of this method of propulsion—but simply to enable the ship to clear her way and keep lumps of ice from accumulating under her bottom. When the bow screw is working in the ahead direction, the "race" of water that is caused thereby washes the bottom of the vessel and clears the ice out of the way; when it is reversed—*i.e.*, in the go-astern direction—the "race" is projected forward, and lumps of ice may thus be washed out from underneath the field-ice, where they are apt to congregate and cause trouble. All the screws have been designed to work against solid ice without damage.

The hull of the *Ermack* is extensively sub-divided into water-tight compartments, of



FRONT VIEW OF THE "ERMACK" IN HEAVY DRIFT ICE. [*Photograph.*



From a] THE "ERMACK" IN THE BALTIC. *[Photograph.*

which there are forty-eight in all. Each of these was tested while the vessel was on the stocks by filling it full, over 16,000 tons of water being used in all. Such is the form of the ship, and such the strength of the structure, that the effect of the ice closing in all round the vessel would simply be to raise it. The ice-belt extends 20ft. on each side round the girth of the hull, and runs from bow to stern.

As is natural with a ship intended for such hard work as is the *Ermack*, there is a great deal of machinery. This is, however, all placed so low that there is ample accommodation, not only for the crew, but also for a good deal of cargo and even passengers. There are four main propelling engines and four smaller propelling engines, or eight sets of engines in all, and there are six double-ended boilers. During her trials in the North Sea the *Ermack* reached a speed of nearly 15¼ knots with 8,000 h.-p. The whole of the propelling machinery is designed with such ample margin of strength that when the engines are brought up suddenly by ice getting in the propellers no harm is done either to engines or to screws. The shafting and all working parts have factors of safety from 35 to 60 per cent. above the requirements of Lloyd's and the Board of Trade. The propeller blades are extremely massive, and are made of nickel steel of great strength.

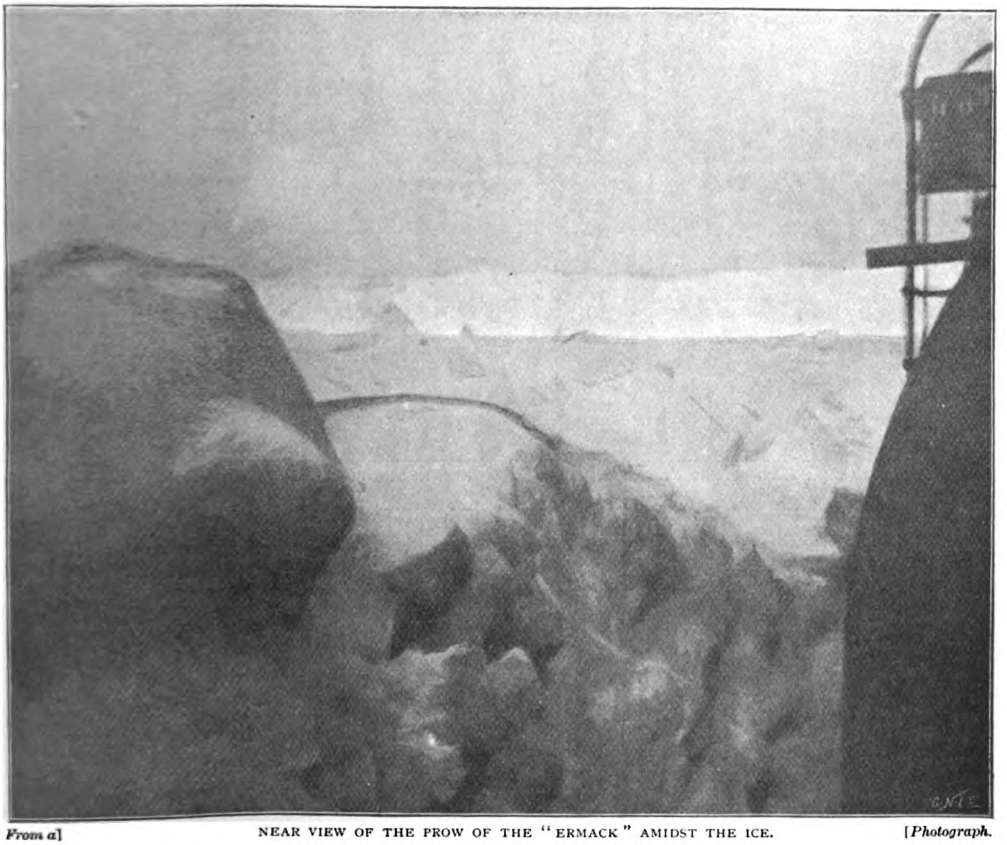
On her first voyage, a few months ago, the *Ermack* behaved in a most satisfactory manner. Her designer, Vice-Admiral Makaroff, and Mr. Arthur Gulston, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, were on board, and from their reports it appears that the *Ermack* first met the ice in the Baltic. It was drift ice, apparently about 5in. thick, and there seems not to have been the slightest difficulty in getting the vessel through the obstruction, as she went comparatively easily at nine knots. The worst piece of ice, we read, which was encountered was 25in. thick, and the ship went nearly through this mass of obstruction before she was brought up by it. The worst field-ice that the *Ermack* had to deal with was apparently 4ft. thick, with snow on the top of it. Snow proved to be the greatest impediment to the ice-breaker's progress,

and this bore out the designer's expectations.

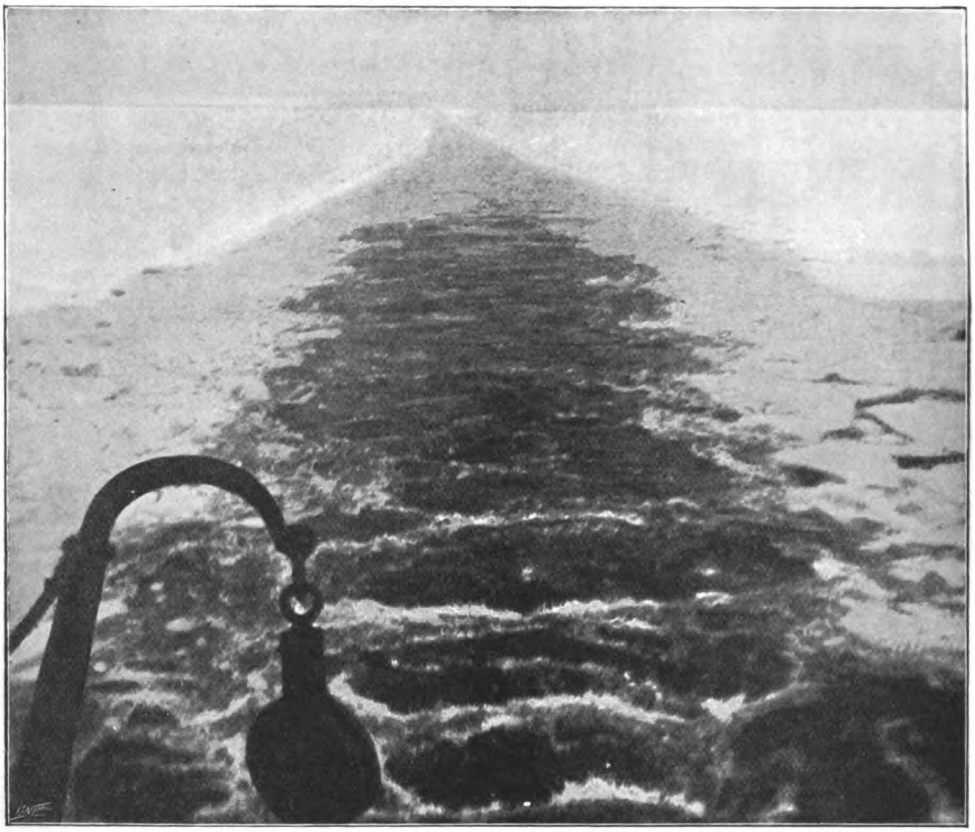
Mr. Gulston says that 12in. of snow on the top of thick field-ice is a serious impediment, and that 18in. almost blocks her. The ice generally in the Baltic appears to have been much more serious in the winter of 1898 than was expected, and it is said to be beyond 1883, which was a record winter. The *Ermack* did not run continuously, but rested at night and started early in the morning, working with the search-light. There was no difficulty in starting her, although she had become fast in the ice. The ice-anchors were put out, and the vessel was warped backwards from her berth, after which she started apparently without any difficulty. In his report Mr. Gulston remarks :—

"She can be steered in any way, at any time, in any ice. This has never been the case with any ice-breakers that have previously been built, and is no doubt largely due to the form of the ship. There is no flat place in her side either vertically or horizontally, so that unless absolutely frozen in solid she can be given some movement, and can thus be worked loose by her own propellers and by ice-anchors."

From all accounts the arrival of the *Ermack* at Cronstadt must have been an extraordinary sight. The Russian newspapers were filled with enthusiastic descriptions of the vessel's majestic entry into the port. The ice was about 18in. thick, with a good deal of snow on the top, but the *Ermack* steamed through this at 6½ knots up to the sea-wall and past the battleships. "She swung round on the port hand and entered the harbour through an entrance only 95ft. wide (the ship is 71ft. beam). She swung once in the inside harbour, and one charge astern put her into her berth alongside the coal store. Some manœuvring trials were made in ice of about 2ft. to 3ft. in thickness, when the turning circle was found to be about 600ft., and there was apparently very little difference in which direction the ship was turned. The effect of the bow propeller was most marked, and it appeared that if this stopped the ship stopped too."



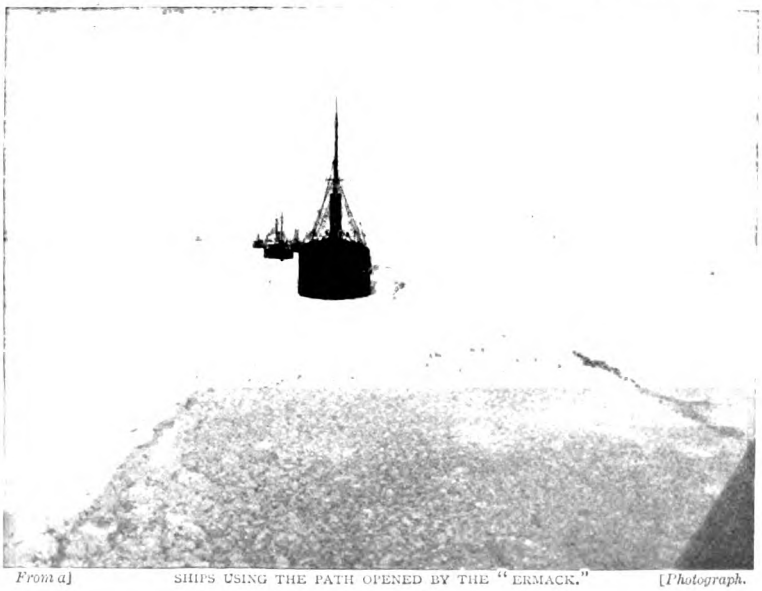
From a] NEAR VIEW OF THE PROW OF THE "ERMACK" AMIDST THE ICE. *[Photograph.*



From a] VIEW OF A PATH OPENED BY THE "ERMACK" FOR SHIPS IN THE NEVA—TAKEN FROM DECK. *[Photograph.*

Whilst in the harbour of Cronstadt the *Ermack* was visited daily by large numbers of people, and Admiral Makaroff, who initiated the employment of ice-breakers in Russian and Siberian waters, was the recipient of numerous letters and telegrams of congratulation, not only from public institutions, but also from the Czar and various officials.

After a few days at Cronstadt the *Ermack* left for Revel, near which twelve steamers were blocked by ice to the danger of their crews. When the ice-breaker arrived the ice was found to be 20ft. thick, but the *Ermack* steamed merrily through the mass and released nine frozen-in steamers. These she convoyed out to sea,

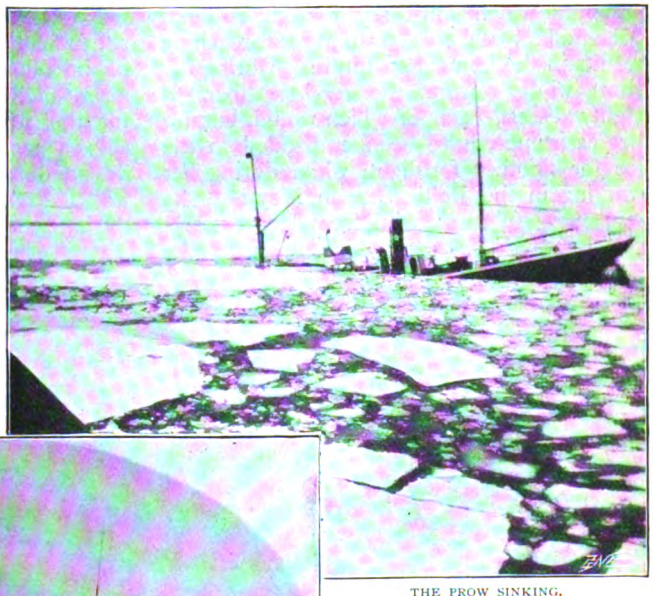


From a] SHIPS USING THE PATH OPENED BY THE "ERMACK." *[Photograph.*

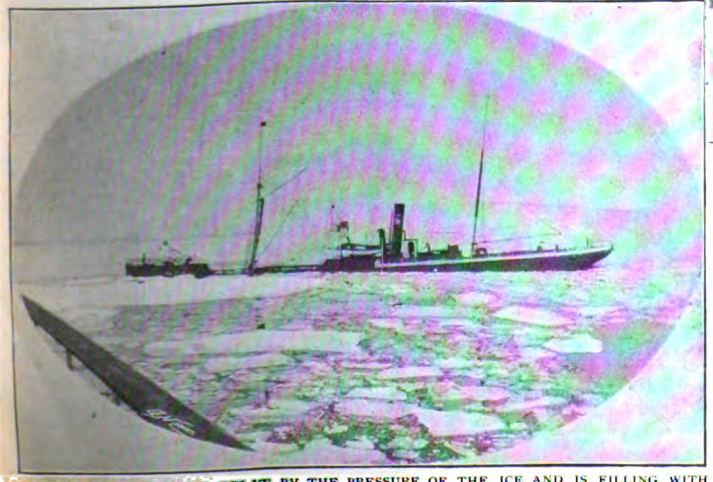
THE SINKING OF THE "FRIGG."
From Photos. taken from the deck of the "Ermack."

and then proceeded to tow into port other vessels which were lying outside, and not daring to enter for fear of being frozen in. Needless to say, the rescued vessels were intensely grateful to the *Ermack* for the services she had rendered. It may be mentioned that one of the ships which the *Ermack* freed was an ice-breaker herself. The *Ermack*, however, is far stronger than any other vessel that has ever been built before, and marks the commencement of a new era in this branch of ship-building.

From Revel the *Ermack* proceeded to St. Petersburg, where her appearance and doings on the ice-bound Neva created an immense sensation. She was received by a deputation, with the mayor at its head, and a grand entertainment was organized at the City Hall in honour of Admiral Makaroff and the officers of the ice-breaker. In May the *Ermack* left for the Kara Sea, where Admiral Makaroff intends to employ her in order to establish quicker communications than at present exist between the



THE PROW SINKING.
From a Photograph.



THE VESSEL HAS BEEN SPLIT BY THE PRESSURE OF THE ICE AND IS FILLING WITH WATER.
From a Photograph.

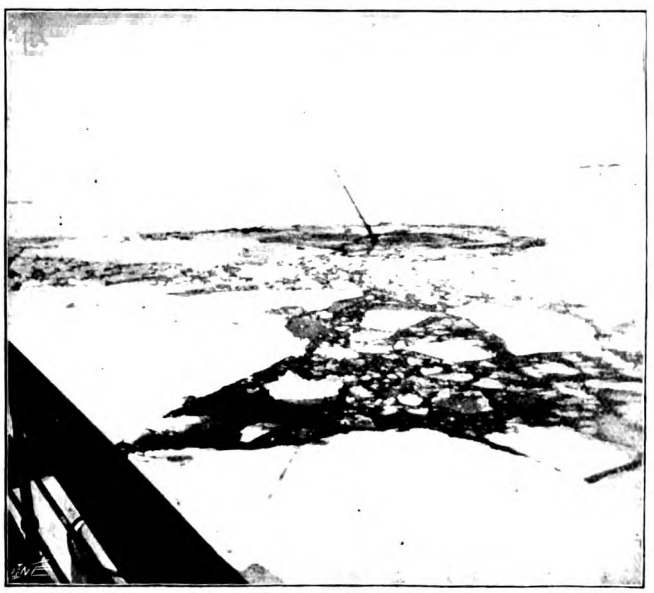
Kara Sea and the mouths of the Siberian rivers.

The successful trials of the *Ermack* seem likely to indicate that the entire condition of navigation to ice-bound ports, and the course of trade with such countries as have hitherto been considered closed by sea in winter, will be revolutionized. Arch-

From a] THE HEADLONG PLUNGE. *[Photograph.*

angel, Cronstadt, Odessa, Vladivostock, Revel, etc., will now be "open ports" in more senses than one, and the benefit to commerce and shipping which must result from Admiral Makaroff's vessel bids fair to have far-reaching results in the immediate future. During her short winter's work, the *Ermack* liberated eighty vessels, each of which would, but for her assistance, have been embedded in the ice for another fortnight, while during her working in the Baltic Sea, in May last, she was successful in rescuing from danger nearly one hundred steamers. These vessels she convoyed through the ice to the ports of Cronstadt and Revel. On the 4th May word was received by Vice-Admiral Makaroff on the *Ermack* that the steamer *Frigg* was in danger near Cronstadt. They at once proceeded to endeavour to render her assistance. Unfortunately, by the time they arrived, the steamer had been severely nipped by the ice, causing her to founder. We are enabled to present our readers with a unique set of photographs showing the sinking of this steamer. These interesting photographs, for which we are indebted to Mr. William Bourn, of Walker-on-Tyne, were taken from the deck of the *Ermack*. We have also to acknowledge the courtesy of Captain Vassiliev, of the *Ermack*, for permission to reproduce them.

Arrangements have been made by Admiral Makaroff for coupling up the *Ermack* with other vessels in order to make a train of ships for more effectually dealing with thick ice. Although the *Ermack* is the strongest ship afloat, there is a limit to her capacity of breaking up ice, and a vessel pushing astern of her would supply additional power for the work. Into the counter of the ship a recess has been built, and this is designed to take the stem of the following vessel, arrangements being made for lashing the latter in firm contact with the leading craft. There seems to be little doubt that with two *Ermacks* fastened together the North Pole could be reached. Whether this will ever be attempted remains to be seen; but at any rate the feat has been brought far nearer by the advent of these ice-breaking steamers than it has ever been before.



From a] THE FINAL SCENE. *[Photograph.*

The Crime of the Brigadier.

By A. Conan Doyle.

IN all the great hosts of France there was only one officer towards whom the English of Wellington's Army retained a deep, steady, and unchangeable hatred. There were plunderers among the French, and men of violence, gamblers, duellists, and roués. All these could be forgiven, for others of their kidney were to be found among the ranks of the English. But one officer of Massena's force had committed a crime which was unspeakable, unheard of, abominable; only to be alluded to with curses late in the evening, when a second bottle had loosened the tongues of men. The news of it was carried back to England, and country gentlemen who knew little of the details of the war grew crimson with passion when they heard of it, and yeomen of the shires raised freckled fists to Heaven and swore. And yet who should be the doer of this dreadful deed but our friend the Brigadier, Etienne Gerard, of the Hussars of Conflans, gay-riding, plume-tossing, debonnaire, the darling of the ladies and of the six brigades of light cavalry.

But the strange part of it is that this gallant gentleman did this hateful thing, and made himself the most unpopular man in the Peninsula, without ever knowing that he had done a crime for which there is hardly a name amid all the resources of our language. He died of old age, and never once in that imperturbable self-confidence which adorned or disfigured his character knew that so many thousand Englishmen would gladly have hanged him with their own hands. On the contrary, he numbered this adventure among those other exploits which he has given to the world, and many a time he chuckled and hugged himself as he narrated it to the eager circle who gathered round him in that humble café where, between his dinner and his dominoes, he would tell, amid tears and laughter, of that inconceivable Napoleonic past when France, like an angel of wrath, rose up, splendid and terrible, before a cowering continent. Let us listen to him as he tells the story in his own way and from his own point of view.

You must know, my friends, said he, that it was towards the end of the year eighteen hundred and ten that I and Massena and the others pushed Wellington backwards until we had hoped to drive him and his army into the Tagus. But when we were still twenty-five miles from Lisbon we found that we were betrayed, for what had this Englishman done but build an enormous line of works and forts at a place called Torres Vedras, so that even we were unable to get through them! They lay across the whole Peninsula, and our army was so far from home that we did not dare to risk a reverse, and we had already learned at Busaco that it was no child's play to fight against these people. What could we do then but sit down in front of these lines and blockade them to the best of our power? There we remained for six months, amid such anxieties that Massena said afterwards that he had not one hair which was not white upon his body. For my own part, I did not worry much about our situation, but I looked after our horses, who were in much need of rest and green fodder. For the rest, we drank the wine of the country and passed the time as best we might. There was a lady at Santarem—but my lips are sealed. It is the part of a gallant man to say nothing, though he may indicate that he could say a great deal.

One day Massena sent for me, and I found him in his tent with a great plan pinned upon the table. He looked at me in silence with that single piercing eye of his, and I felt by his expression that the matter was serious. He was nervous and ill at ease, but my bearing seemed to reassure him. It is good to be in contact with brave men.

"Colonel Etienne Gerard," said he, "I have always heard that you are a very gallant and enterprising officer."

It was not for me to confirm such a report, and yet it would be folly to deny it, so I clinked my spurs together and saluted.

"You are also an excellent rider."

I admitted it.

"And the best swordsman in the six brigades of light cavalry."

Massena was famous for the accuracy of his information.

"Now," said he, "if you will look at this plan you will have no difficulty in under-

"I CLINKED MY SPURS TOGETHER AND SALUTED."

standing what it is that I wish you to do. These are the lines of Torres Vedras. You will perceive that they cover a vast space, and you will realize that the English can only hold a position here and there. Once through the lines you have twenty-five miles of open country which lie between them and Lisbon. It is very important to me to learn how Wellington's troops are distributed throughout that space, and it is my wish that you should go and ascertain."

His words turned me cold.

"Sir," said I, "it is impossible that a colonel of light cavalry should condescend to act as a spy."

He laughed and clapped me on the shoulder.

"You would not be a Hussar if you were not a hot-head," said he. "If you will listen you will understand that I have not asked you to act as a spy. What do you think of that horse?"

He had conducted me to the opening of his tent, and there was a Chasseur who led up and down a most admirable creature. He was a dapple grey, not very tall, a little over fifteen hands perhaps, but with the short head and splendid arch of the neck which comes with the Arab blood. His shoulders and haunches were so muscular, and yet his legs so fine, that it thrilled me with joy just to gaze upon him. A fine horse or a beautiful woman, I cannot look at them unmoved, even now when seventy winters have chilled my blood. You can think how it was in the year '10.

"This," said Massena, "is Voltigeur, the swiftest horse in our army. What I desire is that you should start to-night, ride round the lines upon the flank, make your way across the enemy's rear, and return upon the other flank bringing me news of his dispositions. You will wear a uniform, and will, therefore, if captured, be safe from the death of a spy. It is probable that you will get through the lines unchallenged, for the posts are very scattered. Once through, in daylight you can outride anything which you meet, and if you keep off the roads you may escape entirely unnoticed. If you have not reported yourself by to-morrow night, I will understand that you are taken, and I will offer them Colonel Petrie in exchange."

Ah, how my heart swelled with pride and joy as I sprang into the saddle and galloped this grand horse up and down to show the Marshal the mastery which I had of him! He was magnificent—we were both magnificent, for Massena clapped his hands and cried out in his delight. It was not I, but he, who said that a gallant beast deserves a gallant rider. Then, when for the third time, with my panache flying and my dolman streaming behind me, I thundered past him, I saw upon his hard old face that he had no longer any doubt that he had chosen the man for his purpose. I drew my sabre, raised the hilt to my lips in salute, and galloped on to my own quarters. Already the news had spread that I had been chosen for a mission, and my little rascals came swarming out of their tents to cheer me. Ah! it brings the tears to my old eyes when I think how proud they were

of their Colonel. And I was proud of them also. They deserved a dashing leader.

The night promised to be a stormy one, which was very much to my liking. It was my desire to keep my departure most secret, for it was evident that if the English heard that I had been detached from the army they would naturally conclude that something important was about to happen. My horse was taken, therefore, beyond the picket line, as if for watering, and I followed and mounted him there. I had a map, a compass, and a paper of instructions from the Marshal, and with these in the bosom of my tunic and my sabre at my side I set out upon my adventure.

A thin rain was falling and there was no moon, so you may imagine that it was not very cheerful. But my heart was light at the thought of the honour which had been done me and the glory which awaited me. This exploit should be one more in that brilliant series which was to change my sabre into a bâton. Ah, how we dreamed, we foolish fellows, young, and drunk with success! Could I have foreseen that night as I rode, the chosen man of sixty thousand, that I should spend my life planting cabbages on a hundred francs a month! Oh, my youth, my hopes, my comrades! But the wheel turns and never stops. Forgive me, my friends, for an old man has his weakness.

My route, then, lay across the face of the high ground of Torres Vedras, then over a streamlet, past a farmhouse which had been burned down and was now only a landmark, then through a forest of young cork oaks, and so to the monastery of San Antonio, which marked the left of the English position. Here I turned south and rode quietly over the downs, for it was at this point that Massena thought that it would be most easy for me to find my way unobserved through the position. I went very slowly, for it was so dark that I could not see my hand in front of me. In such cases I leave my bridle loose and let my horse pick its own way. Voltigeur went confidently forward, and I was very content to sit upon his back and to peer about me, avoiding every light. For three hours we advanced in this cautious way, until it seemed to me that I must have left all danger behind me. I then pushed on more briskly, for I wished to be in the rear of the whole army by daybreak. There are many vineyards in these parts which in winter become open plains, and a horseman finds few difficulties in his way.

But Massena had underrated the cunning of these English, for it appears that there was not one line of defence but three, and it was the third, which was the most formidable, through which I was at that instant passing. As I rode, elated at my own success, a lantern flashed suddenly before me, and I saw the glint of polished gun-barrels and the gleam of a red coat.

"I DREW MY SABRE AND RAISED THE HILT TO MY LIPS IN SALUTE."

"Who goes there?" cried a voice—such a voice! I swerved to the right and rode like a madman, but a dozen squirts of fire came out of the darkness, and the bullets whizzed all round my ears. That was no new sound to me, my friends, though I will not talk like a foolish conscript and say that I have ever liked it. But at least it had never kept me from thinking clearly, and so I knew that there was nothing for it but to gallop hard and try my luck elsewhere. I rode round the English picket, and then, as I heard nothing more of them, I concluded rightly that I had at last come through their defences. For five miles I rode south, striking a tinder from time to time to look at my pocket compass. And then in an instant—I feel the pang once more as my memory brings back the moment—my horse, without a sob or stagger, fell stone dead beneath me!

"A DOZEN SQUIRTS OF FIRE CAME OUT OF THE DARKNESS."

I had never known it, but one of the bullets from that infernal picket had passed through his body. The gallant creature had never winced nor weakened, but had gone while life was in him. One instant I was secure on the swiftest, most graceful horse in Massena's army. The next he lay upon his side, worth only the price of his hide, and I stood there that most helpless, most ungainly of creatures, a dismounted Hussar. What could I do with my boots, my spurs, my trailing sabre? I was far inside the enemy's lines. How could I hope to get back again? I am not ashamed to say that I, Etienne Gerard, sat upon my dead horse and sank my face in my hands in my despair. Already the first streaks were whitening the east. In half an hour it would be light. That I should have won my way past every obstacle and then at this last instant be left at the mercy of my enemies, my mission ruined, and myself a prisoner—was it not enough to break a soldier's heart?

But courage, my friends! We have these moments of weakness, the bravest of us; but I have a spirit like a slip of steel, for the more you bend it the higher it springs. One spasm of despair, and then a brain of ice and a heart of fire. All was not yet lost. I who had come through so many hazards would come through this one also. I rose from my horse and considered what had best be done.

And first of all it was certain that I could not get back. Long before I could pass the lines it would be broad daylight. I must hide myself for the day, and then devote the next night to my escape. I took the saddle, holsters, and bridle from poor Voltigeur, and I concealed them among some bushes, so that no one finding him could know that he was a French horse. Then, leaving him lying there, I wandered on in search of some place where I might be safe for the day. In every direction I could see camp fires upon the sides of the hills, and already figures had begun to move around them. I must hide quickly, or I was lost.

But where was I to hide? It was a vineyard in which I found myself, the poles of the vines still standing, but the plants gone. There was no cover there. Besides, I should want some food and water before another night had come. I hurried wildly onwards through the waning darkness, trusting that chance would be my friend. And I was not disappointed. Chance is a woman, my friends, and she has her eye always upon a gallant Hussar.

Well, then, as I stumbled through the vineyard, something loomed in front of me, and I came upon a great square house with another long, low building upon one side of it. Three roads met there, and it was easy to see that this was the posada, or wine shop. There was no light in the windows, and everything was dark and silent, but, of course, I knew that such comfortable quarters were certainly occupied, and probably by someone of importance. I have learned, however, that the nearer the danger may really be the safer place, and so I was by no means inclined to trust myself away from this shelter. The low building was evidently the stable, and into this I crept, for the door was unlatched. The place was full of bullocks and sheep, gathered there, no doubt, to be out of the clutches of marauders. A ladder led to a loft, and up this I climbed and concealed myself very snugly among some bales of hay upon the top. This loft had a small open window, and I was able to look down upon the front of the inn and also upon the road. There I crouched and waited to see what would happen.

It was soon evident that I had not been mistaken when I had thought that this might be the quarters of some person of importance. Shortly after daybreak an English light dragoon arrived with a despatch, and from then onwards the place was in a turmoil, officers continually riding up and away. Always the same name was upon their lips: "Sir Stapleton—Sir Stapleton." It was hard for me to lie there with a dry moustache and watch the great flagons which were brought out by the landlord to these English officers. But it amused me to look at their fresh-coloured, clean-shaven, careless faces, and to wonder what they would think if they knew that so celebrated a person was lying so near to them. And then, as I lay and watched, I saw a sight which filled me with surprise.

It is incredible the insolence of these English! What do you suppose Milord Wellington had done when he found that Massena had blockaded him and that he could not move his army? I might give you many guesses. You might say that he had raged, that he had despaired, that he had brought his troops together and spoken to them about glory and the fatherland before leading them to one last battle. No, Milord did none of these things. But he sent a fleet ship to England to bring him a number of fox-dogs, and he with his officers settled himself down to chase the fox. It is true what I tell you. Behind the lines of Torres Vedras these mad Englishmen made the fox chase three days in the week. We had heard of it in the camp, and now I was myself to see that it was true.

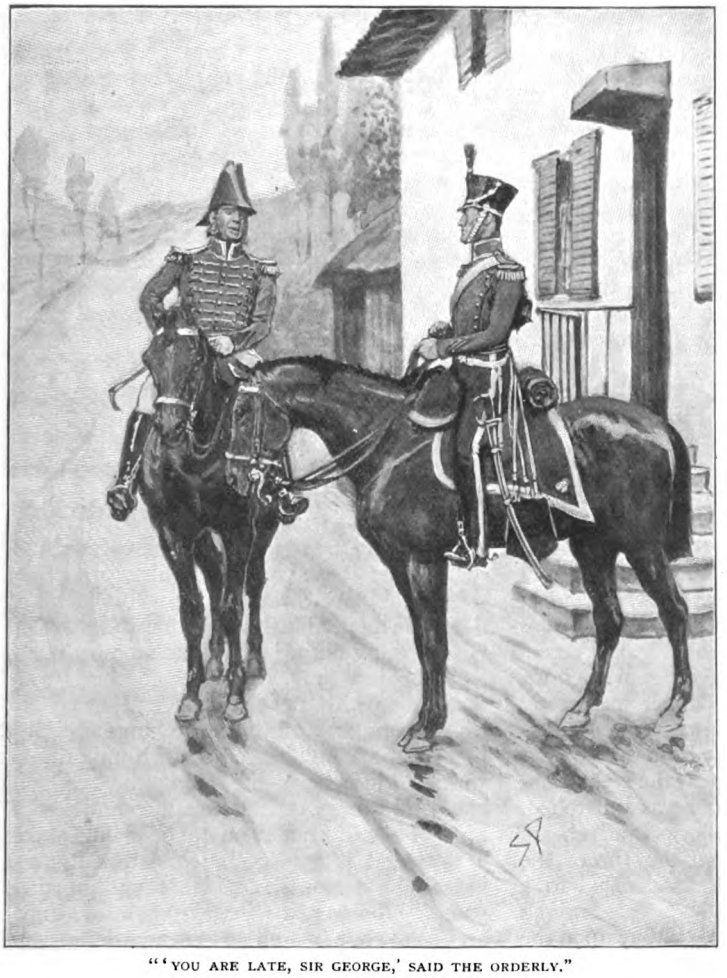
For, along the road which I have described, there came these very dogs, thirty or forty of them, white and brown, each with its tail at the same angle, like the bayonets of the Old Guard. My faith, but it was a pretty sight! And behind and amidst them there rode three men with peaked caps and red coats, whom I understood to be the hunters. After them came many horsemen with uniforms of various kinds, stringing along the roads in twos and threes, talking together and laughing. They did not seem to be going above a trot, and it appeared to me that it must indeed be a slow fox which they hoped to catch. However, it was their affair, not mine, and soon they had all passed my window and were out of sight. I waited and I watched, ready for any chance which might offer.

Presently an officer, in a blue uniform not unlike that of our flying artillery, came cantering down the road—an elderly, stout man he was, with grey side-whiskers. He stopped and began to talk with an orderly officer of dragoons, who waited outside the inn, and it was then that I learned the advantage of the English which had been taught me. I could hear and understand all that was said.

"Where is the meet?" said the officer, and I thought that he was hungering for his bifstek. But the other answered him that it was near Altara, so I saw that it was a place of which he spoke.

"You are late, Sir George," said the orderly.

"Yes, I had a court-martial. Has Sir Stapleton Cotton gone?"



"'YOU ARE LATE, SIR GEORGE,' SAID THE ORDERLY."

At this moment a window opened, and a handsome young man in a very splendid uniform looked out of it.

"Halloa, Murray!" said he. "These cursed papers keep me, but I will be at your heels."

"Very good, Cotton. I am late already, so I will ride on."

"You might order my groom to bring round my horse," said the young General at the window to the orderly below, while the other went on down the road.

The orderly rode away to some outlying stable, and then in a few minutes there came a smart English groom with a cockade in his hat, leading by the bridle a horse—and, oh, my friends, you have never known the perfection to which a horse can attain until you have seen a first-class English hunter. He was superb: tall, broad, strong, and yet as graceful and agile as a deer. Coal black he was in colour, and his neck, and his shoulder, and his quarters, and his fetlocks—how can I describe him all to you? The sun shone upon him as on polished ebony, and he raised his hoofs in a little, playful dance so lightly and prettily, while he tossed his mane and whinnied with impatience. Never have I seen such a mixture of strength and beauty and grace. I had often wondered how the English Hussars had managed to ride over the Chasseurs of the Guards in the affair at Astorga, but I wondered no longer when I saw the English horses.

There was a ring for fastening bridles at the door of the inn, and the groom tied the horse there while he entered the house. In an instant I had seen the chance which Fate had brought to me. Were I in that saddle I should be better off than when I started. Even Voltigeur could not compare with this magnificent creature. To think is to act with me. In one instant I was down the ladder and at the door of the stable. The next I was out and the bridle was in my hand. I bounded into the saddle. Somebody, the master or the man, shouted wildly behind me. What cared I for his shouts! I touched the horse with my

spurs and he bounded forward with such a spring that only a rider like myself could have sat him. I gave him his head and let him go—it did not matter to me where, so long as we left this inn far behind us. He thundered away across the vineyards, and in a very few minutes I had placed miles between myself and my pursuers. They could no longer tell in that wild country in which direction I had gone. I knew that I was safe, and so, riding to the top of a small hill, I drew my pencil and note-book from my pocket and proceeded to make plans of those camps which I could see and to draw the outline of the country.

He was a dear creature upon whom I sat, but it was not easy to draw upon his back, for every now and then his two ears would cock, and he would start and quiver with impatience. At first I could not understand this trick of his, but soon I observed that he only did it when a peculiar noise—"yoy, yoy, yoy"—came from somewhere among the oak woods beneath us. And then suddenly this strange cry changed into a most terrible screaming, with the frantic blowing of a horn. Instantly he went mad—this horse. His eyes blazed. His mane bristled. He bounded from the earth and bounded again, twisting and turning in a frenzy. My pencil flew one way and my note-book another. And then, as I looked down into the valley, an extraordinary sight met my eyes. The hunt was streaming down it. The fox I could not see, but the dogs were in full cry, their noses down, their tails up, so close together that they might have been one great yellow and white moving carpet. And behind them rode the horsemen — my faith, what a sight! Consider every type which a great army could show. Some in hunting dress, but the most in uniforms: blue dragoons, red dragoons, red-trousered hussars, green riflemen, artillery men, gold-slashed lancers, and most of all red, red, red, for the infantry officers ride as hard as the cavalry. Such a crowd, some well mounted, some ill, but all flying along as best they might, the subaltern as good as the general, jostling and pushing, spurring and driving, with every thought thrown to the winds save that they should have the blood of this absurd fox! Truly, they are an extraordinary people, the English!

But I had little time to watch the hunt or to marvel at these islanders, for of all these mad creatures the very horse upon which I sat was the maddest. You understand that he was himself a hunter, and that the crying of these dogs was to him what the call of a cavalry trumpet in the street yonder would be to me. It thrilled him. It drove him wild. Again and again he bounded into the air, and then, seizing the bit between his teeth, he plunged down the slope and

"THE HUNT WAS STREAMING DOWN."

galloped after the dogs. I swore, and tugged, and pulled, but I was powerless. This English General rode his horse with a snaffle only, and the beast had a mouth of iron. It was useless to pull him back. One might as well try to keep a Grenadier from a wine bottle. I gave it up in despair, and, settling down in the saddle, I prepared for the worst which could befall.

What a creature he was! Never have I felt such a horse between my knees. His great haunches gathered under him with every stride, and he shot forward ever faster and faster, stretched like a greyhound, while the wind beat in my face and whistled past my ears. I was wearing our undress jacket, a uniform simple and dark in itself—though some figures give distinction to any uniform—and I had taken the precaution to remove the long panache from my busby. The result was that, amidst the mixture of costumes in the hunt, there was no reason why mine should attract attention, or why these men, whose thoughts were all with the chase, should give any heed to me. The idea that a French officer might be riding with them was too absurd to enter their minds. I laughed as I rode, for, indeed, amid all the danger, there was something of comic in the situation.

I have said that the hunters were very unequally mounted, and so at the end of a few miles, instead of being one body of men, like a charging regiment, they were scattered over a considerable space, the better riders well up to the dogs and the others trailing away behind. Now, I was as good a rider as any, and my horse was the best of them all, and so you can imagine that it was not long before he carried me to the front. And when I saw the dogs streaming over the open, and the red-coated huntsman behind them, and only seven or eight horsemen between us, then it was that the strangest thing of all happened, for I, too, went mad—I, Etienne Gerard! In a moment it came upon me, this spirit of sport, this desire to excel, this hatred of the fox. Accursed animal, should he then defy us? Vile robber, his hour was come! Ah, it is a great feeling, this feeling of sport, my friends, this desire to trample the fox under the hoofs of your horse. I have made the fox chase with the English. I have also, as I may tell you some day, fought the box-fight with the Bustler, of Bristol. And I say to you that this sport is a wonderful thing—full of interest as well as madness.

The farther we went the faster galloped my horse, and soon there were but three men as near the dogs as I was. All thought of fear of discovery had vanished. My brain throbbed, my blood ran hot—only one thing upon earth seemed worth living for, and that was to overtake this infernal fox. I passed one of the horsemen—a Hussar like myself. There were only two in front of me now: the one in a black coat, the other the blue artilleryman whom I had seen at the inn. His grey whiskers streamed in the wind, but he rode magnificently. For a mile or more we kept in this order, and then, as we galloped up a steep slope, my lighter weight brought me to the front. I passed them both, and when I reached the crown I was riding level with the little, hard-faced English huntsman. In front of us were the dogs, and then, a hundred paces beyond them, was a brown wisp of a thing, the fox itself, stretched to the uttermost. The sight of him fired my blood. "Aha, we have you then, assassin!" I cried, and shouted my encouragement to the huntsman. I waved my hand to show him that there was one upon whom he could rely.

And now there were only the dogs between me and my prey. These dogs, whose duty it is to point out the game, were now rather a hindrance than a help to us, for it was hard to know how to pass them. The huntsman felt the difficulty as much as I, for he rode behind them, and could make no progress towards the fox. He was a swift rider, but wanting in enterprise. For my part, I felt that it would be unworthy of the Hussars of Conflans if I could not overcome such a difficulty as this. Was Etienne Gerard to be stopped by a herd of fox-dogs? It was absurd. I gave a shout and spurred my horse.

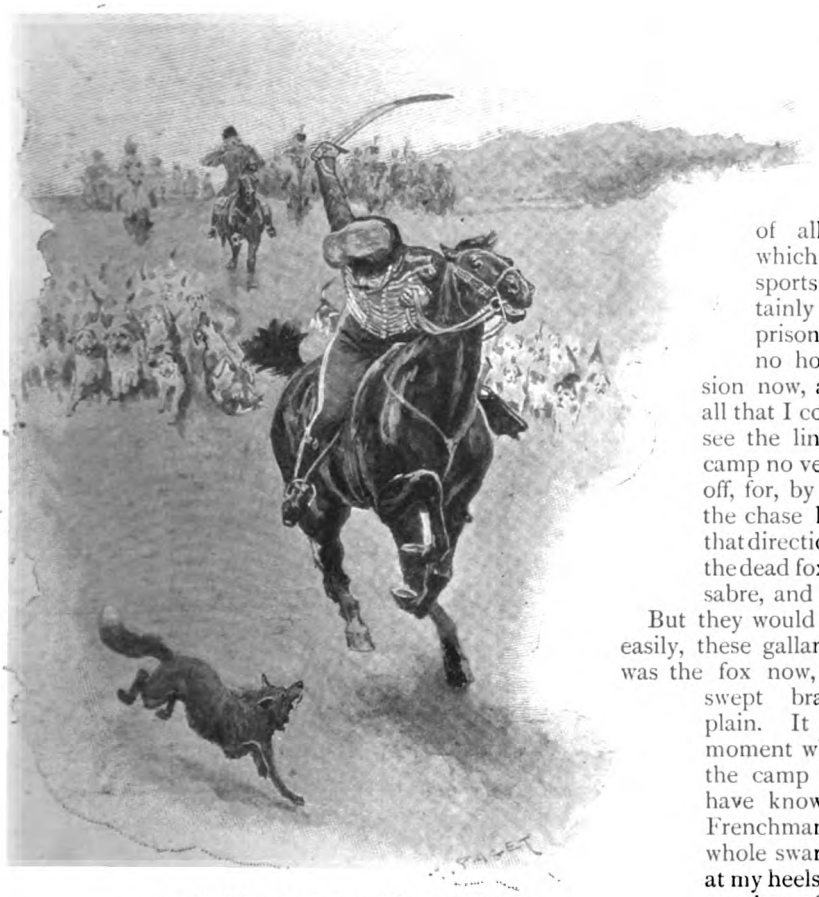
"Hold hard, sir! Hold hard!" cried the huntsman.

He was uneasy for me, this good old man, but I reassured him by a wave and a smile. The dogs opened in front of me. One or two may have been hurt, but what would you have? The egg must be broken for the omelette. I could hear the huntsman shouting his congratulations behind me. One more effort, and the dogs were all behind me. Only the fox was in front.

Ah, the joy and pride of that moment! To know that I had beaten the English at their own sport. Here were three hundred all thirsting for the life of this animal, and yet it was I who was about to take it. I thought of my comrades of the light cavalry brigade, of my mother, of the Emperor, of

France. I had brought honour to each and all. Every instant brought me nearer to the fox. The moment for action had arrived, so I unsheathed my sabre. I waved it in the air, and the brave English all shouted behind me.

Only then did I understand how difficult is this fox chase, for one may cut again and again at the creature and never strike him once. He is small, and turns quickly from a blow. At every cut I heard those shouts of encouragement from behind me, and they spurred me to yet another effort. And then at last the supreme moment of my triumph arrived. In the very act of turning I caught



"AT EVERY CUT I HEARD SHOUTS BEHIND ME."

him fair with such another back-handed cut as that with which I killed the aide-de-camp of the Emperor of Russia. He flew into two pieces, his head one way and his tail another. I looked back and waved the blood-stained sabre in the air. For the moment I was exalted—superb!

Ah! how I should have loved to have waited to have received the congratulations of these generous enemies. There were fifty of them in sight, and not one who was not waving his hand and shouting. They are not really such a phlegmatic race, the English. A gallant deed in war or in sport will always warm their hearts. As to the old huntsman, he was the nearest to me, and I could see with my own eyes how overcome he was by what he had seen. He was like a man paralyzed, his mouth open, his hand, with outspread fingers, raised in the air. For a moment my inclination was to return and to embrace him. But already the call of duty was sounding in my ears, and these English, in spite of all the fraternity which exists among sportsmen, would certainly have made me prisoner. There was no hope for my mission now, and I had done all that I could do. I could see the lines of Massena's camp no very great distance off, for, by a lucky chance, the chase had taken us in that direction. I turned from the dead fox, saluted with my sabre, and galloped away.

But they would not leave me so easily, these gallant huntsmen. I was the fox now, and the chase swept bravely over the plain. It was only at the moment when I started for the camp that they could have known that I was a Frenchman, and now the whole swarm of them were at my heels. We were within gunshot of our pickets before they would halt, and then they stood in knots and would not go away, but shouted and waved their hands at me. No, I will not think that it was in enmity. Rather would I fancy that a glow of admiration filled their breasts, and that their one desire was to embrace the stranger who had carried himself so gallantly and well.

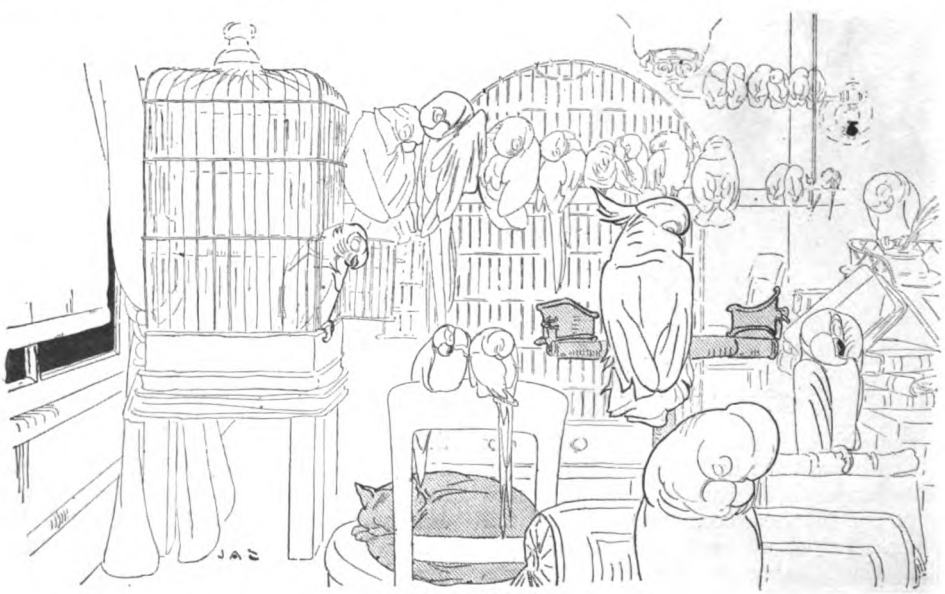
Animal Actualities.

NOTE.—*These articles consist of a series of perfectly authentic anecdotes of animal life, illustrated by Mr. J. A. Shepherd, an artist long a favourite with readers of* THE STRAND MAGAZINE. *While the stories themselves are matters of fact, it must be understood that the artist treats the subject with freedom and fancy, more with a view to an amusing commentary than to a mere representation of the occurrence.*

XVII.

MISS EDITH HAWTHORN, a very well-known bird lover, has a cockatoo which once upon a time distinguished itself brilliantly in police duty, and repelled single-handed—if one may say so when the bird used both claws and a beak—the attack of a burglar; more, the gallant bird arrested and kept prisoner as much of the criminal as he could manage to detain—that is to say, a good large piece of his ear.

"Cuckoo" was the cockatoo's name, and



THE BIRD-ROOM.

THE ATTACK.

he lived, mostly, in Miss Hawthorn's bird-room—a sitting-room on the third floor, containing an aviary and several cages—all left wide open—certain perches, and many birds; parrots, love-birds, and various others, as well as "Cuckoo" himself.

It chanced on a gloomy November day, just before six at the beginning of a dark evening, that the enterprising housebreaker made his attack on Miss Hawthorn's house, choosing, such was his ill-luck, the bird-room as a convenient place wherein to start business. He came silently in at a window, when the house was quiet, and when the birds were all composing themselves for a pleasant sleep. Mrs. Midge, also, the bird-room cat, was taking her repose among the many birds, against not one of whom had

THE ALARM.

THE BATTLE.

she ever lifted the paw of anger. At the sound of the intruder, however, every head was raised, every eye was opened, and every feather stood on end. The next instant Mrs. Midge had sought refuge under the sofa, and every bird had crammed itself into what corner it could; all except "Cuckoo," who met the foe right stoutly, pecked and clawed, and buffeted like twenty fiends incarnate in one cockatoo. The burglar fought also, though it is something of a surprise for any burglar of quiet habits to find himself suddenly attacked in the dark by such an amazing Thing as was clawing at him now. But "Cuckoo" triumphed, and when the noise brought help he was found, exhausted and bloodstained, but victorious, in a disordered room, with the piece of burglarious ear already mentioned and several locks of grey hair as trophies of his hard-fought battle. And that is why they call "Cuckoo" the Policeman.

THE VICTOR.

The Prose of Music.

By J. F. Rowbotham, M.A.

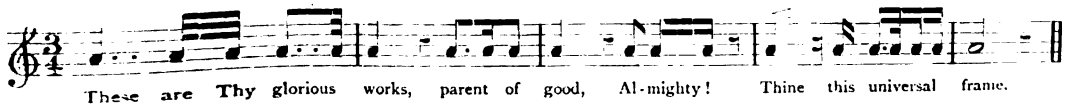
Author of "The History of Music."

IT is on record that a celebrated Italian musician once heard a criminal undergoing a severe castigation in the market-place at the hands of the executioner. The culprit, who was being beaten with what answers in Italy to our cat-o'-nine-tails, uttered such terrible shrieks and cries that the people who were standing round, filled with commiseration, were about to attempt a rescue. The great composer, however, who had been listening intently, put a stop to their intended good offices by remarking to the bystanders that all the criminal's cries were delivered by his *head* voice, not his *chest*; and therefore were artificial. "The man," said the great composer, "is undoubtedly shamming." So, indeed, it actually proved to be, for on examination there was discovered a thick buff jerkin between the man's coat and his back, which had effectually warded off all blows that had been aimed at him. So important is it to cultivate the habit of minute observation, and such an aid did music in this instance prove to the detection of a criminal.

But there are a thousand such things around us in life, most interesting to observe, and most easy to notice, if the attention is once called to them. Not only does music monopolize the field of art and song, but, if we only consider the case, it extends its domain into every spoken and uttered sound. Its realm is commensurate with everything that affects the ear, although directly we leave the sphere of rhythm and melody we undoubtedly arrive at "The Prose of Music," and leave the poetry far behind.

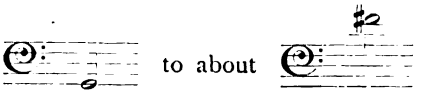
Many words in language are undoubtedly coined in order to express a musical reproduction of the act they signify. Thus: "splash," "scrape," "crack," "crush"—what could be more graphic than these four words, what device could better express the action of splashing and cracking?

But all language, especially blank verse, can have its utterance recorded in musical notes. To take a line from Milton:—

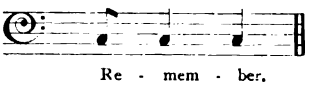


The whole of language, prose and poetry, can be musically expressed on such an analogy; but while the majority of such language proves comparatively uninteresting, the tones of a great actor or the inflections of an eloquent orator offer a theme of fruitful study.

The speaking voice of Mr. Irving will be found to range from

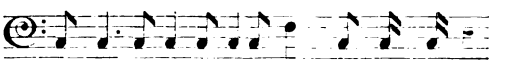


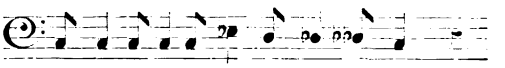
He speaks on each and all the tones between these extremes, sometimes adhering to one note, as, for instance, the parting injunction in "Charles I.":—

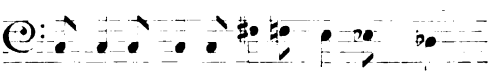


At other times running the whole gamut of the chromatic intervals in one ejaculation, as:—

Mr. Irving's style of utterance is, however, inclined to the monotone rather than to the chromatic; we have heard him say several lines, often, as under:—

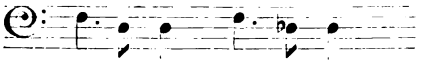




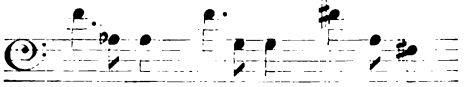


By contrast with this grave style of utter-

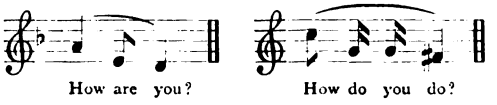
ance Mr. Wilson Barrett's is exceedingly light and buoyant, travels through a greater range of notes, and makes more use of the high and melodious tones of the voice. A forcible illustration of this is his remarkable exclamation in "The Silver King" on the word "innocent." Mr. Irving would most probably have spoken this :—



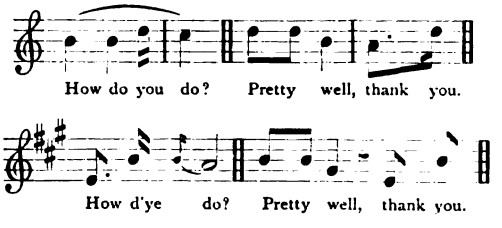
Mr. Wilson Barrett ejaculates :—



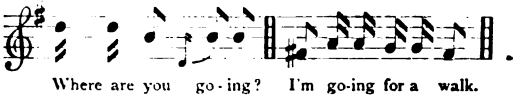
We make use of the language of celebrated actors for our illustrations, because their words and utterances are familiar to thousands ; but students of oratory may form precisely the same observations by listening to their favourite speaker. All language, no matter of what kind, has its music. In ordinary conversation, when we greet a friend, we unconsciously utter the musical phrase :—



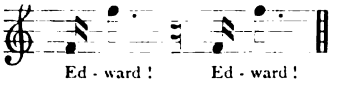
The variations of this ordinary salutation are as numerous as the moods of feeling in which it is uttered. We are aware what a stiff turn can be given to these common words by the spirit in which we say them, so numerous are the musical inflections of the voice. And the following may be added to the above as instancing some of the commonest methods of uttering the familiar address :—



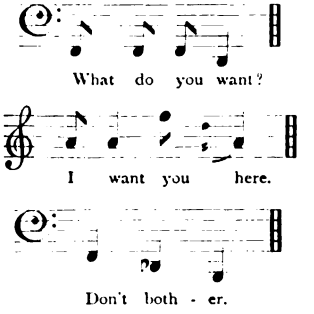
At one time we lift our voice upwards when we address our friends. At another time we let it sink downwards. What is the cause of this difference? Which is the blither and more joyous exclamation of the two? At any rate, both are used, and readers may test the cause of the variation themselves.



Occasionally one may overhear a wife calling to her husband :—



And the reply comes :—



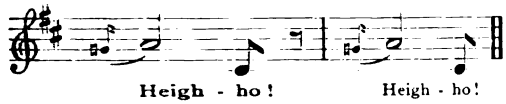
Let us hope that such an answer is not always the final one in a matrimonial conversation ; but at any rate, when it is, it is always intoned so.

The tones of ordinary conversation, when the voice is not uplifted in any eagerness or emotion, seldom range beyond—

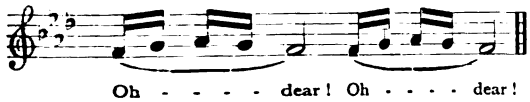
for women, and the bass equivalent notes for men. Small talk, which does not invite any enthusiasm, any feeling, or any excitement, can be always very completely ejaculated by the repetition of these five tones, and the intervening semi-tones and demi-tones. For the peculiarity of spoken language is that it makes great use of the little fraction of intervals which play but a small part in music proper—that is, at least, in the music of European nations. The musical systems of some Orientals are in this respect much closer to speech than ours is.

But suppose we pass from the domain of small talk and chatter, and give vent to any emotional utterance. At once the tones are so decided, and so much alike in every one of us, that it becomes easy to chronicle them and to express them on the stave.

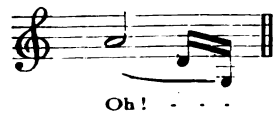
When we sigh, we say :—



When we complain, we ejaculate :—



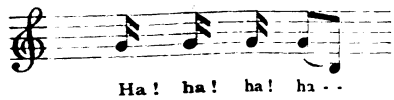
Hurt us, and we all cry :—



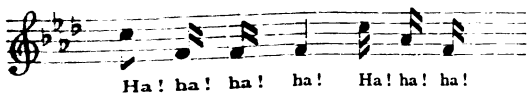
In different keys, perhaps, according to our sex and the pitch of our voices, but in pretty much the same notes, every one of us.

Laughter may be expressed very clearly in music; and it has been artistically expressed many times. Perhaps the best utterance ever given to it is by Handel in "L'Allegro," where the words "Laughter holding both his sides" almost make the notes, despite themselves, burst into a roar of merriment. *Mephistopheles'* laugh in "Faust" on the G in alto will be familiar to opera-goers. Also "laughing" songs and "laughing" choruses many.

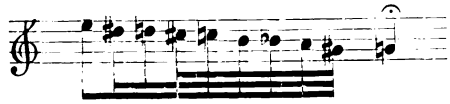
The ordinary laugh of everyday life may be here expressed :—



or in the shorter and snappier style :—

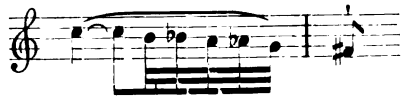


If laughter is so decided in its rhythm and clear in its intonation, crying is decidedly the reverse. It is very hard to register crying in musical notes. The voice slips about at a great rate, and rests such a short while on any given tone, that the finest ear must confess itself baffled in the attempt to record the plaintive utterance of the heart till long practice and many failures have at last rendered the attempt possible. A young lady giving vent to a tempest of sobs, while in the first place she disfigures her countenance, in the second place ought to be warned that she utters the following intolerable musical sentence :—

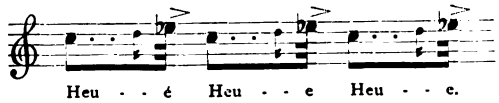


Vary it as she likes, the variations are yet more intolerable :—

and—

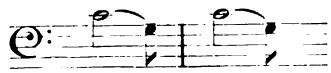


While if at the end of her outburst she falls into a fit of sobbing, the following ugly noise is the result :—



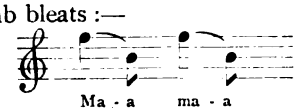
Not to the exclamations of human beings alone does the prose of music extend, but to those of the lower animals likewise.

This is how a cow lows :—

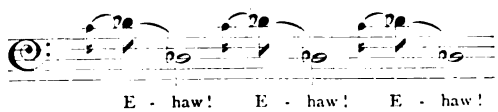


A horse neighs :—

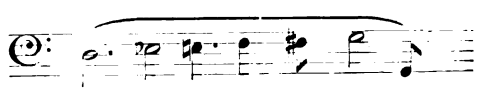
A lamb bleats :—



A donkey brays :—

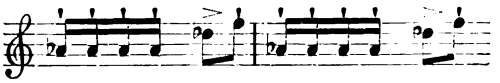


A calf bleats :—

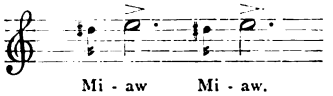


A dog yelps :—

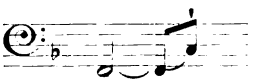
A hen cackles :—



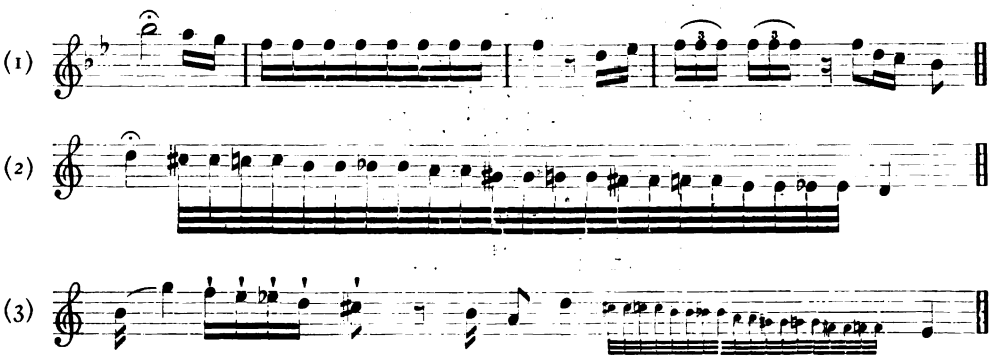
A cat mews :—



A pig grunts :—

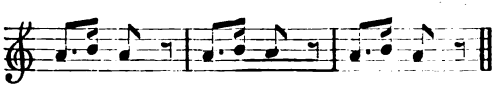


Some of these sounds might be expressed on a more elaborate scale, for these creatures, like ourselves, do not confine themselves to the very simplest utterance of their emotions at all times. And to take the cry of the horse alone, we may offer the three following additional expressions of it :—

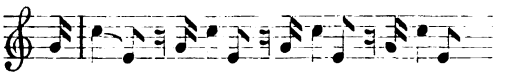


Not only animate beings, but inanimate objects come within the scope of the "Prose of Music."

Who would not recognise the following as "a creaking wheelbarrow" :—

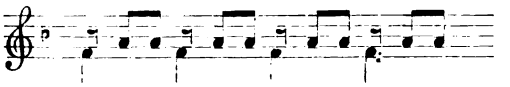


This as "a pair of bellows" blowing :—



and the following, in the same way, as the ring of a counterfeit shilling :—

while the blacksmith on his anvil, so often imitated in songs, is, when reduced to its simplest form :—



The range of the "Prose of Music" is practically commensurate with creation itself, and the Greek philosopher who said there was music in everything was not far from the truth, though we question if he ever thought of including the homely things which we have incorporated in our article.

But enough has been said to show what an interesting field the whole subject opens up, and what untold enjoyment may be had by the amateur investigator if he exercises himself in transferring to musical notes the commonest impressions of his ear.

A Master of Craft.

By W. W. Jacobs.

XVII.

IT is one of the first laws of domestic economy that the largest families must inhabit the smallest houses—a state of things which is somewhat awkward when the heads wish to discuss affairs of state. Some preserve a certain amount of secrecy by the use of fragmentary sentences eked out by nods and blinks and by the substitution of capital letters for surnames: a practice likely to lead to much confusion and scandal when the names of several friends begin with the same letter. Others improve the family orthography to an extent they little dream of by spelling certain vital words instead of pronouncing them, some children profiting so much by this form of vicarious instruction that they have been known to close a most interesting conversation by thoughtlessly correcting their parents on a point of spelling.

There were but few secrets in the Wheeler family, the younger members relating each other's misdeeds quite freely, and refuting the charge of tale-bearing by keeping debit and credit accounts with each other in which assets and liabilities could usually be balanced by simple addition. Among the elders, the possession of a present secret merely meant a future conversation.

On this day the juniors were quite certain that secret proceedings of a highly interesting nature were in the air. Miss Tyrell having been out since the morning, Mrs. Wheeler was looking forward anxiously to her return with the view of holding a little private conversation with her, and the entire Wheeler family were no less anxious to act as audience for the occasion. Mr. Bob Wheeler had departed to his work that morning in a condition which his family, who were fond of homely similes, had likened to a bear with a sore head. The sisterly attentions of Emma Wheeler were met with a boorish request to keep her paws off; and a young Wheeler rash and inexperienced in the way of this weary world, who publicly asked what Bob had "got the hump about," was sternly ordered to finish his breakfast in the wash-house. Consequently there was a full meeting after tea, and when Poppy entered it was confidently expected that proceedings would at once open with a speech from the sofa.

"Take the children outside a bit, Belinda," said her mother, after the tea-things had been removed.

"Got my 'ome lessons to do," said Belinda.

"Do 'em when you come back," said Mrs. Wheeler.

"Sha'n't 'ave time," replied Belinda, taking her books from a shelf; "they'll take me all the evening. We've all got a lot of 'ome lessons to-night."

"Never mind, you take 'em out," persisted Mrs. Wheeler.

"When I want to go out," said Belinda, rebelliously, "you won't let me."

"Do as your mother tells you," commanded Mr. Wheeler, with excellent sternness.

"I want a little quiet," said Mrs. Wheeler; "a little fresh air will do you good, Peter."

"I'll go and smoke my pipe in the wash-house," said Mr. Wheeler, who had his own notions of healthful recreation.

"Take your pipe outside," said Mrs. Wheeler, significantly. "Did you 'ear what I said, Belinda?"

Belinda rose noisily, and gathering up her untidy books, thrust them back in a heap on the shelf, and putting on her hat stood at the door commenting undutifully upon her

"BELINDA."

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parents, and shrilly demanding of the small Wheelers whether they were coming or whether she was to stay there all night. She also indulged in dreary prognostications concerning her future, and finally driving her small fry before her, closed the street door with a bang which induced Mrs. Wheeler to speak of heredity and Mr. Wheeler's sister Jane's temper.

"Where are you going, Poppy?" she inquired, as the girl rose to follow the dutiful Mr. Wheeler. "I want to speak to you a moment."

The girl resumed her seat, and taking up a small garment intended for the youngest Wheeler but two, or the youngest but one, whichever it happened to fit best, or whichever wanted it first, stitched on in silence. "I want to speak to you about Bob," said Mrs. Wheeler, impressively. "Of course you know he never keeps anything from his mother. He 'as told me about all the gells he has walked out with, and though, of course, he 'as been much run after, he is three-and-twenty and not married yet. He told me that none of 'em seemed to be worthy of him."

She paused for so long that Poppy Tyrell looked up from her work, said "Yes," in an expressionless manner, and waited for her to continue.

"He's been a good son," said the mother, fondly; "never no trouble, always been pertickler, and always quite the gentleman. He always smokes his cigar of a Sunday, and I remember the very first money 'e ever earned 'e spent on a cane with a dog's 'ed to it."

"Yes," said Poppy again.

"The gells he's 'ad after 'im wouldn't be believed," said Mrs. Wheeler, shaking her head with a tender smile at a hole in the carpet. "Before you came here there was a fresh one used to come in every Sunday almost, but 'e couldn't make up his mind. We used to joke him about it."

"'BOB?' CRIED POPPY."

"He's very young still," said Poppy.

"He's old enough to be married," said Mrs. Wheeler. "He's told me all about you, he never has no secrets from 'is mother. He told me that he asked you to walk out with 'im last night and you said, 'No'; but I told 'im that that was only a gell's way, and that you'd give 'im another answer soon."

"That was my final answer," said Poppy Tyrell, the corners of her mouth hardening. "I shall never say anything else."

"All young gells say that at first," said Mrs. Wheeler, making praiseworthy efforts to keep her temper. "Wheeler 'ad to ask me five times."

"I meant what I said," said Poppy, stitching industriously. "I shall never change my mind."

"It's early days to ask you perhaps so soon after Captain Flower's death," suggested Mrs. Wheeler.

"That has nothing at all to do with it," said the girl. "I shall not marry your son, in any case."

"Not good enough for you, I suppose?" said the other, her eyes snapping. "In my time beggars couldn't be choosers."

"They can't choose much now," said Poppy, in a low voice; "but as you know I'm going to a situation on Monday, I shall soon be able to pay off my debt to you: though, of course, I can't repay you for your kindness in letting me live here when I had nowhere else to go."

"It isn't me you owe it to," said Mrs. Wheeler. "I'm sure I couldn't 'ave afforded to do it whatever Wheeler liked to say if Bob hadn't come forward and paid for you."

"Bob?" cried Poppy, springing to her feet and dropping her work on to the floor.

"Yes, Bob," said the other, melodramatically; "'im what isn't good enough to be your husband."

"I didn't know," said the girl, brokenly; "you should have told me. I would sooner starve. I would sooner beg in the streets. I will go at once."

"I daresay you know where to go, so I sha'n't worry about you," replied Mrs. Wheeler. "You quiet ones are generally the worst."

"I am sorry," murmured Poppy; "I did not mean to be rude, or ungrateful."

"You're very kind," said Mrs. Wheeler. "Is Mr. Fraser up in London?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said the girl, pausing at the door.

"Sure to be, though," said Mrs. Wheeler, significantly; "you won't 'ave to starve, my dear. But, there, you know that—some people's pride is a funny thing."

Miss Tyrell regarded her for a moment in silence, and then quitted the room, coming back again from half-way up the stairs to answer a knock at the door. She opened it slowly, and discovered to her horror Mr. Fraser standing upon the doorstep, with a smile which was meant to be propitiatory, but only succeeded in being uneasy.

"Is that Mr. Fraser?" demanded Mrs. Wheeler's voice, shrilly.

"That's me," said Fraser, heartily, as he shook hands with Poppy and entered the room.

"I thought you wouldn't be far off," said Mrs. Wheeler, in an unpleasant voice. "Poppy's been expecting you."

"I didn't know that Mr. Fraser was coming," said Poppy, as the helpless man looked from one to the other. "I suppose he has come to see you. He has not come to see me."

"Yes, I have," said Mr. Fraser, calmly. "I wanted——"

But Miss Tyrell had gone quietly upstairs, leaving him to gaze in a perturbed fashion at the sickly and somewhat malicious face on the sofa.

"What's the matter?" he inquired.

"Nothing," said Mrs. Wheeler.

"Isn't Miss Tyrell well?"

"So far as I'm permitted to know the state of 'er 'ealth, she is," was the reply.

"Mr. Wheeler well?" inquired Fraser, after a long pause.

"Very well, I thank you," said Mrs. Wheeler.

"And Miss Wheeler, and Bob, and the whole pa——and all of them?" said Fraser.

"All very well," said Mrs. Wheeler.

His stock of conversation being exhausted, he sat glancing uncomfortably round the littered room, painfully conscious that Mrs. Wheeler was regarding him with a glance that was at once hostile and impatient. While he was wondering whether Miss Tyrell had gone upstairs for a permanency, he heard her step on the stairs, and directly afterwards she appeared at the door with her hat and jacket on.

"Good-bye, Mrs. Wheeler," she said, gravely.

"Good-bye," said Mrs. Wheeler, in the same way that a freer-speaking woman would have said "Good riddance."

The girl's eyes rested for a moment on Fraser. Then she bade him good-bye, and, opening the door, passed into the street.

Fraser looked at Mrs. Wheeler in perplexity, then, jumping up suddenly as Poppy passed the window, he crossed to the door.

"Good-bye, Mrs. Wheeler," he shouted, and, vaguely conscious that something was wrong somewhere, dashed off in pursuit.

Poppy Tyrell, her face pale and her eyes burning, quickened her pace as she heard hurrying footsteps behind her.

"I just wanted a few words with you, Miss Tyrell," said Fraser, somewhat breathlessly.

"I—I am going on business," said Poppy, in a quiet voice.

"I didn't understand Mrs. Wheeler just now," said Fraser. "I hope you didn't mind my calling?"

"Oh, no," said the girl; "call as often as you like, but this evening I'm busy. Come to-morrow."

This hospitality over-reached itself. "Have you left the Wheelers?" he inquired, suddenly.

"Yes," said Poppy, simply.

"What's the good of telling me to call, then?" inquired Fraser, bluntly.

"They will be pleased to see you, I'm sure," said Miss Tyrell.

"Where are you going?" asked Fraser.

Miss Tyrell made no reply, except to favour him with a glance which warned him not to repeat the question, and he walked beside her for some time in silence.

"Good-bye," she said, suddenly.

"I'm not going," said Fraser, with artless surprise.

"Mr. Fraser," said the girl, reddening with anger, "will you please understand that I wish to be alone?"

"No," said Mr. Fraser, doggedly.

"A gentleman would not have to have half as much said to him," said Poppy, trembling.

"Well, thank God I'm not a gentleman," said Fraser, calmly.

"If I had a father or a brother you would not behave like this," said the girl.

"If you had a father or a brother they would do it instead," said Fraser, gently;

"it's just because you've got nobody else that I'm looking after you."

Miss Tyrell, who had softened slightly, stiffened again with temper.

"You?" she said, hotly. "What right have you to trouble yourself about me?"

"No right at all," said Fraser, cheerfully, "but I'm going to do it. If you've left the Wheelers, where are you going?"

Miss Tyrell, gazing straight in front of her, made no reply.

"Won't you tell me?" persisted the other.

"I'm not going anywhere," said Poppy, stopping suddenly and facing him. "I've got a new berth next Monday, and to-morrow morning I am going to see them to ask them to employ me at once."

"And to-night?" suggested the other.

"I shall go for a walk," said the girl. "Now that you know all about my concerns, will you please go?"

"Walk?" repeated Fraser. "Walk? What, all night? You can't do it—you don't know what it's like. Will you let me lend you some money? You can repay me as soon as you like."

"No, thank you."

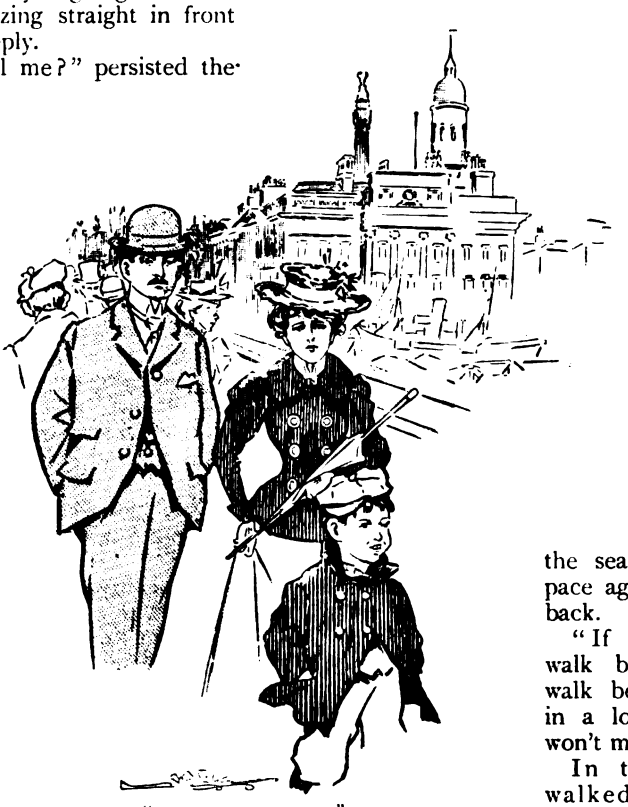
"For my sake?" he suggested.

Miss Tyrell raised her eyebrows.

"I'm a bad walker," he explained.

The reply trembling on Miss Tyrell's lips realized that it was utterly inadequate to the occasion, and remained unspoken. She walked on in silence, apparently oblivious of the man by her side, and when he next spoke to her made no reply. He glanced at a clock in a baker's shop as they passed, and saw that it was just seven.

In this sociable fashion they walked along the Commercial Road and on to Aldgate, and then, passing up Fenchurch Street, mingled with the crowd thronging homewards over London Bridge. They went as far as Kennington in this direction, and then the girl turned and walked back to the City. Fraser, glancing at the pale profile beside him, ventured to speak again.



"OVER LONDON BRIDGE."

"Will you come down to Wapping and take my cabin for the night?" he asked, anxiously. "The mate's away, and I can turn in for'ard—you can have it all to yourself."

Miss Tyrell, still looking straight in front of her, made no reply, but with another attempt to shake off this pertinacious young man of the sea quickened her pace again. Fraser fell back.

"If I'm not fit to walk beside you, I'll walk behind," he said, in a low voice; "you won't mind that?"

In this way they walked through the rapidly thinning streets. It was now dark, and most of the shops had closed. The elasticity had departed from Miss Tyrell's step, and she walked aimlessly, noting with a sinking at the heart the slowly passing time. Once or twice she halted from sheer weariness, Fraser halting too, and watching her with a sympathy of which Flower would most certainly have disapproved if he had seen it.

At length, in a quiet street beyond Stratford, she not only stopped, but turned and walked slowly back. Fraser turned too, and his heart beat as he fancied that she intended to overtake him. He quickened his pace in time with the steps behind him until they slackened and faltered; then he looked round and saw her standing in the centre of

the pathway with her head bent. He walked back slowly until he stood beside her, and saw that she was crying softly. He placed his hand on her arm.

"Go away," she said, in a low voice.

"I shall not."

"You walked away from me just now."

"I was a brute," said Fraser, vehemently.

The arm beneath his hand trembled, and he drew it unresistingly through his own. In the faint light from the lamp opposite he saw her look at him.

"I'm very tired," she said, and leaned on him trustfully. "Were you really going to leave me just now?"

"You know I was not," said Fraser, simply.

Miss Tyrell, walking very slowly, pondered. "I should never have forgiven you if you had," she said, thoughtfully. "I'm so tired, I can hardly stand. You must take me to your ship."

They walked slowly to the end of the road, but the time seemed very short to Fraser. As far as he was concerned he would willingly have dispensed with the tram which they met at the end and the antique four-wheeler in which they completed their journey to the river. They found a waterman's skiff at the stairs, and sat side by side in the stern, looking contentedly over the dark water, as the waterman pulled in the direction of the *Swallow*, which was moored in the tier. There was no response to their hail, and Fraser himself, clambering over the side, assisted Miss Tyrell, who, as the daughter of one sailor and the guest of another, managed to throw off her fatigue sufficiently to admire the lines of the small steamer.

Fraser conducted her to the cabin, and motioning her to a seat on the locker, went forward to see about some supper. He struck a match in the forecastle and scrutinized the sleepers, and coming to the conclusion that something which was lying doubled up in a bunk, with its head buried in the pillow, was the cook, shook it vigorously.

"Did you want the cook, sir?" said a voice from another bunk.

"Yes," said Fraser, sharply, as he punched the figure again and again.

"Pore cookie ain't well, sir," said the seaman, sympathetically; "'e's been very delikit all this evenin'; that's the worst o' them teetotalers."

"All right; that'll do," said the skipper, sharply, as he struck another match, and gave the invalid a final disgusted punch. "Where's the boy?"

A small, dirty face with matted hair protruded from the bunk above the cook and eyed him sleepily.

"Get some supper," said Fraser, "quick."

"Supper, sir?" said the boy, with a surprised yawn.

"And be quick about it," said the skipper, "and wash your face first, and put a comb through your hair. Come, out you get."

The small sleeper sighed disconsolately, and, first extending one slender leg, clambered out and began to dress, yawning pathetically as he did so.

"And some coffee," said Fraser, as he lit the lamp and turned to depart.

"Bill," said the small boy, indignantly.

"Wot d'ye want?" said the seaman.

"'Elp me to wake that drunken pig up," said the youth, pointing a resentful finger at the cook. "I ain't goin' to do all the work."

"You leave 'im alone," said Bill, ferociously. The cook had been very liberal that evening, and friendship is friendship, after all.

"That's what a chap gets by keeping hisself sober," said the youthful philosopher, as he poured a little cold tea out of the kettle on to his handkerchief and washed himself. "Other people's work to do."

He went grumbling up to the galley, and, lighting some sticks, put the kettle on, and then descended to the cabin, starting with genuine surprise as he saw the skipper sitting opposite a pretty girl, who was leaning back in her seat fast asleep.

"Cook'll be sorry 'e missed this," he murmured, as he lighted up and began briskly to set the table. He ran up on deck again to see how his fire was progressing, and thrusting his head down the forecastle communicated the exciting news to Bill.

To Fraser sitting watching his sleeping guest it seemed like a beautiful dream. That Poppy Tyrell should be sitting in his cabin and looking to him as her only friend seemed almost incredible. A sudden remembrance of Flower subdued at once the ardour of his gaze, and he sat wondering vaguely as to the whereabouts of that erratic mariner until his meditations were broken by the entrance of the boy with the steaming coffee, followed by Bill bearing a couple of teaspoons.

"I nearly went to sleep," said Poppy, as Fraser roused her gently.

She took off her hat and jacket, and Fraser, taking them from her, laid them reverently in his bunk. Then Poppy moved

farther along the seat, and, taking some coffee, pronounced herself much refreshed.

"I've been very rude to you," she said, softly; "but Mrs. Wheeler was very unkind, and said that of course I should go to you. That was why."

"Mrs. Wheeler is——" began Fraser, and stopped suddenly.

"Of course it was quite true," said Poppy, healthfully attacking her plate; "I did have to come to you."

"It was rather an odd way of coming," said Fraser; "my legs ache now."

The girl laughed softly, and continued to laugh. Then her eyes moistened, and her face became troubled. Fraser, as the best thing to do, made an excuse and went up on deck, to the discomfort of Bill and the boy, who were not expecting him.

Poppy was calm again by the time he returned, and thanked him again softly as he showed her her bunk and withdrew for the night. Bill and the boy placed their berths at his disposal, but he declined them in favour of a blanket in the galley, where he sat up and slept but ill all night, and was a source of great embarrassment to the cook next morning when he wanted to enter to prepare breakfast.

"A SOURCE OF EMBARRASSMENT TO THE COOK."

Poppy presided over that meal, and it and the subsequent walk to discover lodgings are among Fraser's dearest memories. He trod on air through the squalid roads by her side, and, the apartments having been obtained, sat on the arm of the arm-chair—the most comfortable part—and listened to her plans.

"And you won't go away without letting me know?" he said, as he rose to depart.

Miss Tyrell shook her head, and her eyes smiled at him. "You know I won't," she said, softly. "I don't want to."

She saw him to the door, and until he had quitted the gate kept it hospitably open. Fraser, with his head in a whirl, went back to the *Swallow*.

XVIII.

THE prime result of Mrs. Banks's nocturnal ramble with Mr. William Green was a feeling of great bitterness against her old friend, Captain John Barber. Mr. Green, despite her protests, was still a member of the crew of the *Foam*, and walked about Seabridge in broad daylight, while she crept forth only after sundown, and saw a hidden meaning in every "Fine evening, Mrs. Banks," which met her. She pointed out to Captain Barber that his refusal to dismiss Mr. Green was a reflection upon her veracity, and there was a strange light in her eyes and a strange hardening of her mouth as the old man said that to comply with her request would be to reflect upon the polite seaman's veracity.

Her discomfiture was not lessened by the unbecoming behaviour of her daughter, who, in some subtle manner, managed to convey that her acceptance of her mother's version of the incident depended upon the way she treated Mr. Frank Gibson. It was a hard matter to a woman of spirit, and a harder thing still that those of her neighbours who listened to her account of the affair were firmly persuaded that she was setting her cap at Captain Barber.

To clear her character from this imputation, and at the same time to mark her

sense of the captain's treatment of her, Mrs. Banks effected a remarkable change of front, and, without giving him the slightest warning, set herself to help along his marriage with Mrs. Church.

She bantered him upon the subject when she met him out, and, disregarding his wrathful embarrassment, accused him in a loud voice of wearing his tie in a love-knot. She also called him a turtle-dove. The conversation ended here, the turtle-dove going away crimson with indignation and cooing wickedly.

Humbled by the terrors of his position, the proud shipowner turned more than ever to Captain Nibletts for comfort and sympathy, and it is but due to that little man to say that anything he could have done for his benefactor would have given him the greatest delight. He spent much of his spare time in devising means for his rescue, all of which the old man listened to with impatience and rejected with contumely.

"It's no good, Nibletts," he said, as they sat in the subdued light of the cabin one evening. "Nothing can be done. If anything could be done, I should have thought of it."

"Yes, that's what struck me," said the little skipper, dutifully.

"I've won that woman's 'art," said Captain Barber, miserably; "in 'er anxiety to keep me the woman's natur' has changed. There's nothing she wouldn't do to make sure of me."

"It's understandable," said Nibletts.

"It's understandable," agreed Captain Barber, "but it's orkard. Instead o' being a mild, amiable sort o' woman, all smiles, the fear o' losing me has changed 'er into a determined, jealous woman. She told me herself it was love of me 'as 'ad changed her."

"You ain't written to her, I suppose?" asked Nibletts, twisting his features into an expression of great cunning.

Captain Barber shook his head. "If you'd think afore speaking, Nibletts," he said, severely, "you'd know as people don't write to each other when they're in the same house."

The skipper apologized. "What I mean to say is this," he said, softly. "She hasn't got your promise in writing, and she's done all the talking about it. I'm the only one you've spoken to about it, I s'pose?"

Captain Barber nodded.

"Well, forget all about it," said Nibletts, in an excited whisper.

Captain Barber looked at him pityingly.

"What good'll that do?" he asked.

"Forget the understanding," continued Nibletts, in a stage whisper, "forget everything; forget Captain Flower's death, act as you acted just afore he went. People'll soon see as you're strange in your manner, and I'll put the news about as you've been so affected by that affair that your memory's gone."

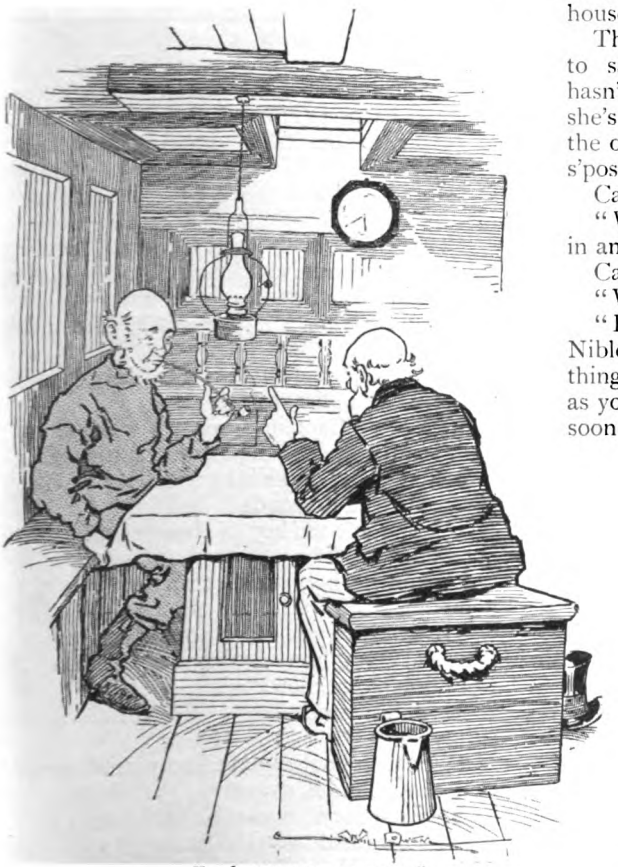
"I was thinking of doing that the other day myself," said Captain Barber, slowly and untruthfully.

"I thought you was, from something you said," replied Nibletts.

"I think I spoke of it, or I was going to," said Barber.

"You did say something," said Nibletts.

"I wonder what would be the best way to begin," said Barber, regarding him attentively.



"IT'S NO GOOD, NIBLETTS."

Captain Nibletts's nerve failed him at the responsibility.

"It's your plan, Captain Barber," he said, impressively, "and nobody can tell a man like you how it should be done. It wants acting, and you've got to have a good memory to remember that you haven't got a memory."

"Say that agin," said Captain Barber, breathing thickly.

Captain Nibletts repeated it, and Captain Barber, after clearing his brain with a glass of spirits, bade him a solemn good-night, and proceeded slowly to his home. The door was opened by Mrs. Church, and a hum of voices from the front room indicated company. Captain Barber, hanging his hat on a peg, entered the room to discover Mrs. Banks and daughter, attended by Mr. Gibson.

"Where's Fred?" he asked, slowly, as he took a seat.

"*Who?*" said Miss Banks, with a little scream.

"Lawk-a-mussy, bless the man," said her mother. "I never did."

"Not come in yet?" asked Barber, looking round with a frightful stare. "The *Foam's* up."

The company exchanged glances of consternation.

"Why, is he alive?" inquired Mrs. Church, sharply.

"Alive," repeated Captain Barber. "Why shouldn't he be? He was alive yesterday, wasn't he?"

There was a dead silence, and then Captain Barber from beneath his shaggy eyebrows observed with delight that Gibson, tapping his forehead significantly, gave a warning glance at the others, while all four sitting in a row watched anxiously for the first signs of acute mania.

"I expect he's gone round after you, my dear," said the wily Barber to Miss Banks.

In the circumstances this was certainly cruel, and Gibson coughed confusedly.

"I'll go and see," said Miss Banks, hurriedly; "come along, mother."

The two ladies, followed by Mr. Gibson, shook hands and withdrew hurriedly. Captain Barber, wondering how to greet Mrs. Church after he had let them out, fixed his eyes on the carpet and remained silent.

"Aren't you well?" inquired the lady, tenderly.

"Well, ma'am?" repeated Uncle Barber, with severity.

"Ma'am?" said Mrs. Church, in tones of tender reproach; "two hours ago I was Laura. Have you been to the Thorn?"

"What Thorn?" demanded Captain Barber, who had decided to forget as much as possible, as the only safe way.

"The Thorn Inn," said Mrs. Church, impatiently.

"Where is it?" inquired Captain Barber, ingenuously.

Mrs. Church looked at him with deep consideration. "Why, at the end of the cottages, opposite the Swan."

"What Swan?" inquired Captain Barber.

"The Swan Inn," said Mrs. Church, restraining her temper, but with difficulty.

"Where is it?" said Uncle Barber, with breezy freshness.

"Opposite the Thorn, at the end of the row," said Mrs. Church, slowly.

"Well, what about it?" inquired Captain Barber.

"Nothing," said Mrs. Church, sharply, and proceeded to set supper.

Captain Barber, hugging himself over his scheme, watched her eagerly, evincing a little bewilderment as she brought on a small, unappetizing rind of cheese, bread, two glasses, and a jug of water. He checked himself just in time from asking for the cold fowl and bacon left from dinner, and, drawing his chair to the table, eyed the contents closely.

"Only bread and cheese?" he said, somewhat peevishly.

"That's all," said Mrs. Church, smiling; "bread and cheese and kisses."

Captain Barber tapped his forehead. "What did we have for dinner?" he asked, suddenly.

"Sausages," replied Mrs. Church, blandly; "we ate them all."

A piece of Captain Barber's cheese went the wrong way, and he poured himself out some water and drank it hurriedly. "Where's the beer?" he demanded.

"You've got the key of the cask," said the housekeeper.

Captain Barber, whose temper was rising, denied it.

"I gave it to you this morning," said Mrs. Church; "you were going to do something to it, don't you know?"

"I don't remember," said Uncle Barber, surlily.

"Whatever has happened to your memory?" said Mrs. Church, sweetly.

"My memory," said the trickster, slowly, passing his hand over his brow; "why, what's the matter with it?"

"ONLY BREAD AND CHEESE?"

"It doesn't seem quite so good as it was," said the lady, affectionately. "Never mind, my memory will have to do for both."

There was enough emphasis on this last sentence to send a little chill through the captain's frame. He said nothing, but keeping his eye on his plate attacked his frugal meal in silence, and soon afterwards went upstairs to bed to think out his position.

If his own memory was defective, Mrs. Church's was certainly redundant. When he came hurrying in to dinner next day she remembered that he had told her he should not be home to that meal. He was ungallant enough to contemplate a raid upon hers; she, with a rare thoughtfulness, had already eaten it. He went to the Thorn, and had some cold salt beef, and cursed the ingenious Nibletts, now on his way to London, sky-high.

Mrs. Banks came in the next evening with her daughter, and condoled with the housekeeper on the affliction which had already been noised about Seabridge. Mrs. Church, who had accepted her as an ally, but with mental reservations, softly applied a handkerchief to her eyes.

"How are you feeling?" demanded Mrs. Banks, in the voice of one addressing a deaf invalid.

"I'm all right," said Barber, shortly.

"That's his pride," said Mrs. Church, mournfully; "he won't own to it. He can't remember anything. He pretends he doesn't know me."

"Who are you?" asked the sufferer, promptly.

"He'll get the better of it," said Mrs. Banks kindly, as her quondam foe wiped her eyes again. "If he don't, you'd better marry *before* October."

To say that Captain Barber pricked up his ears at this indicates but feebly his interest in the remark. He held his breath and looked wildly round the room as the two ladies, deftly ignoring him, made *their* arrangements for *his* future.

"I don't like to seem to hurry it," said the housekeeper.

"No, of course you don't. If he said October, naturally October it ought to be, in the usual way," remarked the other.

"I never said October," interrupted the trembling mariner.

"There's his memory again," said Mrs. Banks, in a low voice.

"Poor dear," sighed the other.

"We'll look after your interests," said Mrs. Banks, with a benevolent smile. "Don't you remember meeting me by the church the other night and telling me that you were going to marry Mrs. Church in October?"

"No," bawled the affrighted man.

"Clean gone," said Mrs. Church, shaking her head; "it's no use."

"Not a bit," said Mrs. Banks.

"October seems rather early," said Mrs. Church, "especially as he is in mourning for his nephew."

"There's no reason for waiting," said Mrs. Banks, decidedly. "I daresay it's his loneliness that makes him want to hurry it. After all, he ought to know what he wants."

"I never said a word about it," interposed Captain Barber, in a loud voice.

"All right," said Mrs. Banks, indulgently.

"What are you going to wear, my dear?" she added, turning to the housekeeper.

Mrs. Church seemed undecided, and Captain Barber, wiping the moisture from his brow, listened as one in a dream to a long discussion on the possibilities of her wardrobe. Thrice he interrupted, and thrice the ladies, suspending their conversation for a moment, eyed him with tender pity before resuming it.

"Me and Frank thought of October," said Elizabeth, speaking for the first time. She looked at Captain Barber, and then at her mother. It was the look of one offering to sell a casting vote.

"I NEVER FORGET ANYTHING."

"October's early," said the old lady, bridling.

Mrs. Church looked up at her, and then modestly looked down again. "Why not a double wedding?" she asked, gently.

Captain Barber's voice was drowned in acclamations. Elizabeth kissed Mrs. Church, and then began to discuss her own wardrobe. The owner of the house, the owner of the very chairs on which they were sitting, endeavoured in vain to stop them on a point of order, and discovered to his mortification that a man without a memory is a man without influence. In twenty minutes it was all settled, and even an approximate date fixed. There was a slight movement on the part of Elizabeth to obtain Captain Barber's opinion upon that, but being reminded by her mother that he would forget all about it in half an hour's time, she settled it without him.

"I'm so sorry about your memory, Captain Barber," said Mrs. Banks, as she prepared to depart. "I can understand what a loss it is. My memory's a very good one. I never forget anything."

"You forget yourself, ma'am," returned her victim, with unconscious ambiguity, and, closing the door behind her, returned to the parlour to try and think of some means of escaping from the position to which the ingenuity of Captain Nibletts, aided by that of Mrs. Banks, had brought him.

(To be continued.)

Du Maurier at the "Punch" Table.

By Henry W. Lucy.

THE *Punch* Dinner Table is one of the closest corporations in the world. The door of the room where the weekly feast is held is as jealously "tiled" as if the business of the evening were connected with Freemasonry. In my time, men finally honoured with invitation to sit "round the mahogany tree" went through a sort of probationary term. Once or twice a year there were jaunts up the river or four-in-hand drives to famous country taverns. Here dinner was served in bountiful fashion. But it was not at *the* Table, and it was therefore permissible for the editor to include in the invitation specially favoured outside contributors.

There was a memorable occasion when, in 1881, Frank Burnand succeeding to the editorship, the principle of extending the borders of companionship was liberally interpreted. All the regular outside contributors, whether with pen or pencil, were bidden to a feast spread at the Albion, a famous City inn.

After dinner we played at "Wednesday night in Bouverie Street." The waiters were sent out of the room, the attention of the company concentrated, and the signal given, "Now, gentlemen, the big cartoon, if you please."

The big cartoon is still, as it has been for many years, the work of that *preux chevalier*, John Tenniel. The second cut—the undercut it is more familiarly called — grows under the graceful pencil of Linley Sambourne. The big cartoon looks, as a work of consummate art should look, easy to do when it is finished and laid out on the bookstalls. The general impression in the minds of nine-tenths of the ladies and gentlemen who buy *Punch* on Wednesday is that Sir John Tenniel knocked off the cartoon on Tuesday afternoon, probably between lunch and dinner time. That idea, whilst belittling the thought and labour involved, is, really, a compliment to the work. The *Punch* cartoon, necessarily dealing with the subtlest developments of intricate political events, often of international concern, comes out on a Wednesday so pat to the actual situation of the hour, that it is natural to suppose it was achieved, as leading articles in the morning paper are, on the latest intelligence of the night before publication.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Punch's young men, sitting in council on one Wednesday night, must needs see a week ahead, the cartoon illustrating the position not as it is on Wednesday the first of the month, but as it will be on Wednesday the eighth. This is skating over very thin ice, a practice rendered possible only by the exercise of intimate knowledge of political affairs, combined with sound judgment. Only once in recent times has *Punch* stumbled, and the accident is so rare that everyone remembers it. When the relief column was advancing to the deliverance of Gordon, cooped up in Khartoum, a point was reached whereat the final triumph seemed a matter of a clearly defined number of days. Viewing the situation, as usual, a week ahead, the cartoon was devised showing Gordon out of the thicket. On Wednesday morning, when the triumphant cartoon was opened on all the bookstalls, there came news that Gordon was slain.

The outsiders, guests at the Albion dinner party in 1881, knew nothing of all this. Each in turn set himself with a light heart to devising a cartoon, and probably no room of the same size encompassed an equal amount of impracticable rubbish.

I have no recollection of meeting du Maurier at this my first *Punch* dinner. It was later in the same year that I came into close companionship with him, beginning a friendship that only death chilled. It was on the occasion of one of the trips up the river, engineered and personally conducted by bluff-mannered, generous-hearted William Bradbury, the representative of the proprietors of *Punch*, who for more than a generation sat in the vice-chair at the Wednesday dinner, with du Maurier on his left hand.

From a Photo. by Linley Sambourne.

A famous outing of this kind has its memory preserved by a set of photographs taken on the spot. We drove to Dorking in a four-in-hand, du Maurier to our regret being unable to join the party. It was in mid-July, but the weather turned out more appropriate to mid-winter. However, we made the best of it, and Linley Sambourne (known to his brethren at the table by the affectionate diminutive "Sammy") undertook to picture the scene. Three times, under slightly varying circumstances of weather, we formed a group. In the first photograph, hatted and hooded, with coats buttoned up and umbrellas ready (F. C. B., careful of a precious life, has, it will be observed, placed a newspaper between

From a Photo. by Linley Sambourne.

the soles of his boots and the sodden turf), we enjoyed the July weather of the so-called nineteenth century.

A little later came a gleam of sunshine. Off went the coats, down were flung the

From a Photo. by Harry Furniss.

umbrellas, heads were uncovered, and we made believe it was a summer day. (Observe Sir John Tenniel mopping his brow, wet with honest sweat of a sultry day.) Scene III. Presto! The sun has fled, dark clouds are gathered again, and we, once more coated and hatted, enjoy July weather. In this last scene the figure on the extreme right is altered, Harry Furniss going off to work the camera, so that Sammy's manly form might adorn the picture.

On the occasion ever stored in memory as that on which I made du Maurier's acquaintance, we were to join the steam launch at a point on the river some two miles distant from the railway station. On leaving the train I found there was only one fly at the door, and that already engaged by two gentlemen. By strange good fortune I gathered from direction given to the cabman that they were going to the very place whither I was bound. I ventured to ask to be allowed to share the expense of the fly, a request courteously granted. We jogged along, talking of the weather and other non-committal topics, till we arrived at the inn yard, where I found my editor standing amid a cheerful little group of otherwise unfamiliar faces. This, I found, was the *Punch* staff, and lo! my companions in the fly were two of its oldest members.

In later years it chanced that I sat every Wednesday night between Gil à Beckett and The Professor, as Percival Leigh was called. We sometimes talked about that drive, and they told me how they had wondered who the deuce I was that I should want to be driving to the very inn where Mr. Punch and his young men foregathered with designs on dinner. I fancy they thought it was exceedingly presumptuous conduct.

Before dinner we went for a spin up the river in the launch. Du Maurier in his boyish fashion was lying full length in the bow of the boat, smoking his eternal cigarette. I timidly approached, planted myself in his neighbourhood, and he, in his unvaried simple, unaffected manner, forthwith began to talk as if we had been friends since schooldays. He was a charming talker, and enjoyed the exercise of his gift. But in this respect, as in all others, he was absolutely free from anything like assumption or self-assertion. His talk was as unpremeditated, frequently as joyous, as the singing of the lark.

At the weekly council he rarely contributed suggestions to the cartoon. He had no care for, and very little knowledge of, politics, with which the work was chiefly concerned.

Sometimes when the design and its treatment were settled in every detail, and there came the consideration of the title, he would flash forth a happy suggestion that settled a knotty point. (I have known the discussion over the title of the cartoon exceed in length debate on design of the picture.) It was after work was done, fresh cigars lit, tumblers filled, and the flood of hilarity, temporarily dammed by the obstacle of serious work, once more surging, that du Maurier developed into Kicky, and became, as someone effusive to the point of a misplaced plural said, "the life and souls of the party." On summer nights he liked to take his coat off, borrow an additional chair, and, reclining on the two, open out the founts of his fancy and his humour.

It happened that, everyone seated in his appointed place at the table, I was through the dinner separated by the length of the board from du Maurier. Often, when William Bradbury had gone off to catch an early train for his suburban home, I migrated to the empty seat next to du Maurier, occasions when I did not get home very early. As for du Maurier, once he had got his coat off, with two chairs to loll upon, a box of cigarettes at hand, and a bottle of claret on the table, he did not want to go home at all. Nor was there any need suggested by the well of his brilliant conversation running dry.

Perhaps one influence that made him shrink from starting for home was the length of the journey, and the inevitable trouble with the cabman. During the greater part of his connection with *Punch* he lived on the verge of Hampstead Heath. It was a charming place—when you got there. But, as du Maurier used to say, parodying a line from a music-hall refrain then popular, "You've got to get there fust." The bloated London cabman, on the look-out for fat fares for short distances, shrank with honest indignation from the prospect of receiving a shilling over the regulation fare for a journey to the extreme edge of the four-mile radius, including ascent of one of the slopes of Hampstead Hill.

When Major O'Gorman was still with us in the House of Commons—

> Our portly and ponderous Major,
> Our mighty, magnificent Major:
> The Councils of State
> Have no man of such weight
> Or such girth as our bould Irish Major

it was told in the smoking-room how, when he appeared in Palace Yard with evident design of being driven home, all the drivers of four-wheelers lashed their horses into a gallop and dashed out of the Yard, fearful lest one or other should be selected to convey this more than nineteen stone of humanity. Du Maurier told me, and here the conception was even more fanciful, that as soon as he emerged from Bouverie Street into Fleet Street, after the Wednesday night dinner, the hansom cabmen right and left whipped up their horses and fled.

"They knew I wanted to go to Hampstead," he gravely insisted.

In later years he overcame this difficulty in the happiest fashion. As he admitted, his house, "when you got there," was what agents call extremely "eligible." It stood in a quiet, old-fashioned street, with a view of the Heath, over which du Maurier frequently trudged and communed with himself. It was during one of these morning walks, on this occasion accompanied by a friend, that he first told the story of Peter Ibbetsen, suggesting it as the framework of a novel.

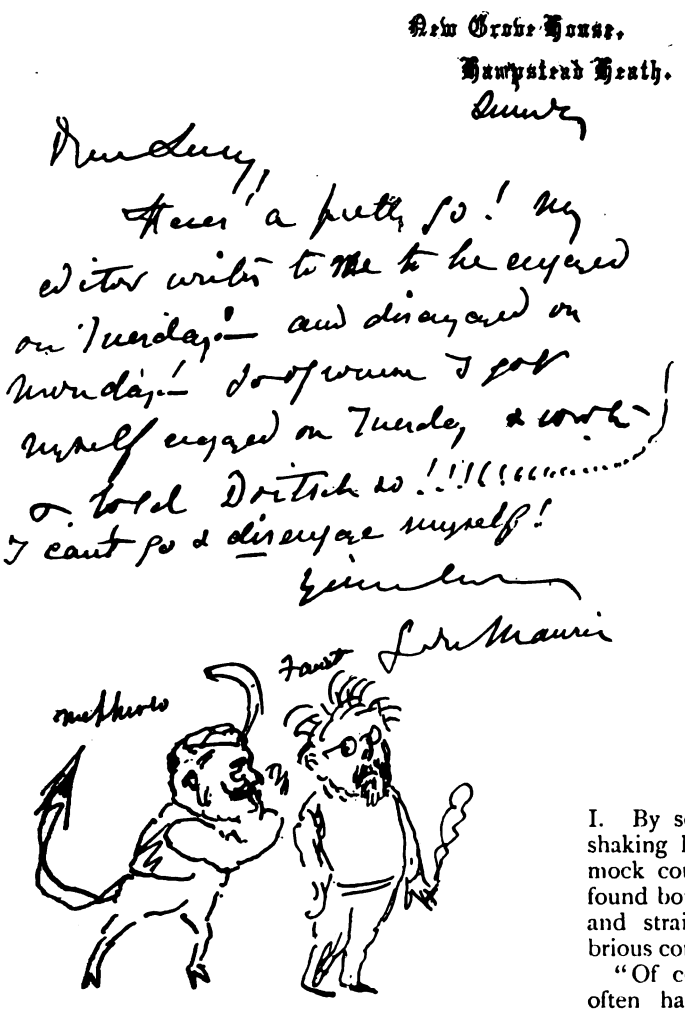
"Why don't you write it yourself?" asked his companion.

Du Maurier laughed at the idea. He was a poor artist in black and white. It was not for him to take up the pen to compete with the ready writer. Still, he was fascinated by the plot his fancy had evolved, and urgently pressed it on the acceptance of his friend, to make his own book withal. The generous offer was declined, and so it came to pass that, as no one else would do it, du Maurier wrote "Peter Ibbetsen."

Some years before his death there came an offer to rent New Grove House, furnished for the summer season. Du Maurier jumped at this opportunity of a change of residence nearer to the centre of things in town. Thereafter he generally let his Hampstead house, and, with the rent received, took a furnished house in a more accessible region. When the success of his novels made him rich beyond his modest dreams of avarice he finally quitted Hampstead, taking the lease of a roomy corner house in Oxford Square. Last of all, he finally went back to Hampstead, carried through a crowd that lined the old familiar ways, housed and homed in a corner of the churchyard whose walls he had often skirted on his way to and from the *Punch* dinner-table.

During the weeks of his residence in town he seized the opportunity of giving a succession of dinner parties. Whether as host or guest, he was a charming man to meet in Bouverie Street or elsewhere. Here

is one of his little notes about a dinner he missed, interesting chiefly for the sketch of Burnand as *Mephistopheles* and himself as *Faust.*



I happened to be present at what was, I believe, the last of a delightful series of home dinners interrupted by his illness. As usual, it was a small party, the number designed to meet what du Maurier properly regarded as an essential to a successful dinner, the opportunity of occasional lapses into general conversation.

"When I go out to an ordinary dinner party," he used to say, "I often feel that I might as well be dining at a *table d'hôte.* I have a neighbour on my right and another on my left to whom I talk in turn. For all practical purposes I am dining with these two whom possibly I never met before, may never see again, whose company I certainly did not select. They may be moderately bright; in which case one has a pleasant dinner. Ten to one they are duffers, and like a starling you may have read about, I can't get out. At least not until the long, unlovely dinner is over."

An incident in connection with this last dinner party at Oxford Square dwells in my mind as revealing a certain stage of hypochondria that marked the approach to the end. Amongst the guests were Mrs. Humphry Ward, Sir George Trevelyan, and Mr. Andrew Lang. Everything went brightly, only the host sitting strangely silent with a rare look of moodiness on his face. He told me afterwards in tone of bitter disappointment that he had taken special pains to make up the party, and it had proved a dismal failure. Andrew Lang is a very old friend of mine. For more than twenty years we were colleagues on the same morning journal. He arrived in the drawing-room some few minutes later than I. By some sudden freak, instead of shaking hands as others did, we with mock courtesy made each other a profound bow. Du Maurier observed this, and straightway drew the most lugubrious conclusions.

"Of course I know," he said. "It often happens that fellows living together on a paper fall out. But I'd no idea you and Lang weren't on speaking terms."

It was with the greatest difficulty I eased his mind on this point. On the general question of the success of the brilliant little party he would not be comforted.

Success in a new field, the magnitude of which comes to but one man in a generation, had no effect in the direction of turning du Maurier's head. Whilst the new world and the old were ringing with praise of "Trilby," whilst the Haymarket was blocked with a crowd patiently waiting their turn to gain admission to the theatre where it had been

placed on the stage, the author was in his relations with his family and at the Punch Table the same simple-mannered, delightful companion known to them before, as he said, he "struck ile." Nevertheless, there was a palpable change in him, the result of fading health. His blood chilled with premonitory touch of the hand of death, he fell into moods of depression, plaining that success had come too late. A week or two after the dinner in Oxford Square he dined with us on what turned out to be the last time I saw him. He was in much better spirits, talking hopefully about another novel he had in his mind in succession to "The Martians."

"And what will you call it?" his old friend Lord Wolseley asked.

"'Soured by Success,'" du Maurier quickly answered.

At the *Punch* Table du Maurier was always Kicky, as the late Percival Leigh was The Professor, as Sir John Tenniel still is Jack Ides, and as Linley Sambourne is reduced to the proportions of Sammy. The difference is that whereas these last three names were conferred at the Table, du Maurier brought his with him from his nursery. When he was a child in Brussels, just sixty-three years ago, there was of the household a Flemish servant named Francis. Between the burly Flamande and the baby boy there existed a strong affection. In his latest days du Maurier recalled how Francis used to take him in his arms and carry him off to show him some birds painted on window-panes. The child thought they were real, and wondered they didn't fly away. Francis called his little pet "*Le manniken.*" Infant lips attempting to pronounce the phrase produced "Kicky." Thus it came to pass that in the family circle and in the brotherhood of the *Punch* Table he was Kicky to the end.

His real name was, in its full length, far more imposing: George Louis Palmella Busson du Maurier! It sounds like the style of one of Ivanhoe's companions. As a matter of fact, it is of modern origin. The family name was Busson. Du Maurier is a territorial appellation derived from a château built in the fifteenth century, situated either in Anjou or Maine, du Maurier was not certain which.

"Anyhow," he said, on the only occasion he referred to the matter, "it's a brewery now."

Du Maurier, though he did not often talk of it, was proud of his family descent, and was well acquainted with the ramifications of the family tree. In "Peter Ibbetsen," all unsuspected, lurk names that grow upon it, transferred to characters in the novel. His mother was an Englishwoman; his father, though a Frenchman, was born in England. Their famous son was born in Paris on the 6th of March, 1834. He did not come into large inheritance of the world's goods. The household income was drawn chiefly from the family glass works in Anjou. The father, from whom du Maurier inherited his love of music and his beautiful voice, was a somewhat impracticable man. He was ever hitting upon inventions that were, some day, to make the family fortune, and meanwhile ate up the monthly remittances from the prosaic glass works. He moved about from Paris to Brussels, from Belgium to London, from No. 1, Devonshire Terrace (later the home of Charles Dickens), to Boulogne, from Boulogne back to Paris, and once more to London, where young du Maurier was sent to the Birkbeck laboratory with instructions from his father to become a great chemist.

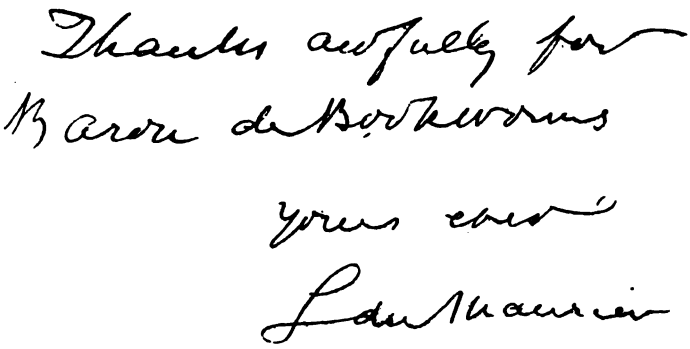
This design was pursued to the extent that, in his twentieth year, George Louis Palmella was set up in business on his own account in a chemical laboratory, under the shadow of the Mansion House. But business did not come. Two years later du Maurier *père* died, leaving but small provision for his family. Kicky accompanied his widowed mother to Paris, straightway striding upon the true pathway of his career. He entered as a student at Gleyre's, a studio of which, with its charming companionship, all the world has read in "Trilby." A year later he went to Antwerp, working hard in the Academy.

This is the episode in his life that furnished material for several chapters in "The Martians." Here befell the great disaster minutely described in the novel. Drawing one day from a model, the sight of his left eye suddenly failed him, it being, indeed, closed for ever. The student was long depressed by apprehension of total blindness. Happily his right eye was preserved, and with it he accomplished the varied delicate work turned out through the next forty years. A year or two before his death he had fresh anxiety about his eye, and for a while had to lay down his pencil. He wrote to me from Hampstead on the 20th of January, 1892:—

"Thanks awfully for Baron de Bookworms. "Yours ever,

"G. DU MAURIER."

A facsimile of this is given at the top of the next page.


Thanks awfully for
Baron de Bookworms
Yours ever
L du Maurier

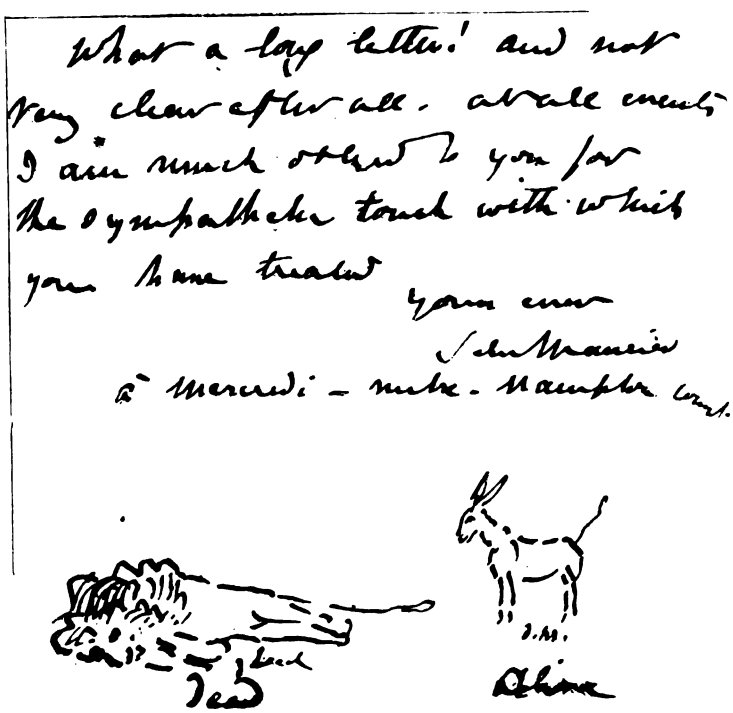
The photographer, who du Maurier professed to believe was "a Deacon on Sundays," was extremely wrath.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I would have you understand that this is not an ordinary painter's studio where you can smoke and be otherwise disorderly."

The scene greatly tickled the fancy of the light-hearted couple. Du Maurier made a sketch of the pompous photographer, Whistler, and himself, and sent it in to *Punch*. It was accepted, "and from that day," du Maurier said, "I have never lacked bread and cheese. Indeed, sometimes I have found my bread buttered on both sides."

In a letter, undated, probably written in 1891 or '92, du Maurier enters upon a subtle appreciation of his own position and scope as an artist, compared with those of Leech. The moral is shown in the little sketch at the foot where Leech appears as a dead lion, du Maurier representing himself as the living donkey.

In 1860 du Maurier again set up in London, henceforward his home and workshop. He had lodgings in Newman Street, sharing them with Whistler, then, like himself, an obscure young man exceedingly anxious to earn a guinea. He early gained a footing on *Once a Week*, for which he drew regularly. His first drawing appeared in *Punch* in 1860, and, as he used laughingly to say, it was all due to Whistler. One day the chums looked in at the studio of a photographer. Whistler was smoking a cigarette, and continued to puff away in the very Presence.


What a long letter! and not very clear after all. at all events I am much obliged to you for the sympathetic touch with which you have treated
Yours ever
L du Maurier
à Mercredi – mike – Hampton Court.

It has been told how the man who had long established a reputation as an artist in black and white happed upon the more immediately successful, infinitely more lucrative, work of the novelist. Possibly renewed trouble with his eyesight crystallized intention in the matter. If he lost his remaining eye he could no longer continue his beloved work in *Punch*, but he might, even if as blind as Milton, write books. His method of composition necessitated by the state of his eyesight was peculiar. He sat by the fireside with paper on his knee and pencil in hand writing rapidly, without attempt to follow with dim sight the formation of words or sentences. It was a labour of love for his wife or one of his daughters to make of the pathetically blurred MS. a fair copy for the press.

He did not care much about "Trilby," round which the world went mad. Probably this was in part due to resentment of the world's neglect of what he held to be the greater work, "Peter Ibbetsen." Therein I agreed with him, but was not able to follow him in his further conviction that greatest of all was "The Martians." He often talked to me about that book whilst the story was growing under his hand. He felt he must satisfy the expectation created by the phenomenal success of "Trilby." To that task he set himself laboriously and hopefully, dying in the sure and certain hope that he had achieved his aim. I read "Trilby" whilst it was running in *Harper's*, and seem to have written to say how much I enjoyed its freshness and vigour. I find this note in reply :—

"New Grove House,
"Hampstead Heath,
"June, 3, '91.

"My Dear Lucy, — Many thanks for your kind letter (which I shall ever value) about 'Trilby,' the daughter of my old age. I am indeed proud to think she beguiled your weariness instead of sending you to sleep — and that you are not insensible to 'the charms of my literary style.' I hope she will go on pleasing you, till she departs this life, which she will do in the August number of *Harper's Magazine*, and that Mrs. Lucy will drop a tear! With kind regards to you both,

"Yours ever,
"G. du Maurier."

One of his vain regrets was that he had not hit upon his real vocation before a time of life when he would not have opportunity to work out the abundance of plots and fancies with which his mind was stored. Early in 1896, "The Martians" just out of hand, he told me he had in his mind the full plot of a fourth novel. "Too late, too late," he murmured, speaking rather to himself than to me. The announcement of what proved to be his fatal illness appeared in the newspapers side by side with bold advertisement that so great was the rush for the number of *Harper's Magazine* containing the opening chapters of "The Martians," that on the day after publication a second edition went to press. "Too late, too late!" Probably one of du Maurier's bitterest reflections as he lay on his deathbed was that he was dying with nearly all his music in him.

In his study at New Grove House there hung one of his few water-colours, a portrait of his friend, Canon Ainger. I think of another picture in which Canon Ainger last figured near his old friend. He stood, white-surpliced, reading in broken voice passages from the Burial Service, the sunshine of an October afternoon overhead; beneath, the grave in which we laid all that was left of the form that was Kicky's.

By Herbert Compton.

IT was away out West (said Doolittle), back in the seventies. We skinned the town for one hundred and thirteen dollars—the smartest scoop as ever you heard of. Doolittle and Mahafferty's Dime Museum floated out of that combine. And now Mick's a member of Congress, and me—Dan Doolittle—well, I reckon to run the best show in Chicago.

I was a drummer in those days, on the road for Phantom Skillig.ew and Company, wind-engine manufacturers, and they busted and left me high and dry in Sumpter City, Idaho, with a ten-dollar bill and a telegram to look out for another job. I tell you I felt that mean I was ashamed of my own shadow the morning I met Mick Mahafferty fossicking round the saloons on the breezy.

"Begorrah, Johnson!" he cried, coming up to me cordial like, "I never dreamed for to meet you here!"

"I'm not Johnson," I answered him.

"Sure then," said he, "'tis Tim O'Connor. I was always a dunce at names. It's the faces I nivver forget."

"O'Connor's not my name either," said I, a bit riled, for I suspicioned the fellow.

"Arrah then, it bates me intoirely to remimber who it is!" and he scratched his head, and looked hard at me so as I couldn't escape him.

"I'm Daniel Doolittle," said I; "and if you want the truth, I don't know you from the devil."

"Bedad! It's always a mistake I'm after making. Ah! the disappointments of life!" groaned Mick, heaving a sigh fit to fill a football; "and to think, now, if you'd been Johnson I could have borrowed a dollar from you quite asy!"

"'Pears to me you are not one of them poor sort of critters that gets lost for want of cheek!"

"True for you. Nivver that!" he cried, shaking his head as sober as a parson. "'Tis the only gift God gave me, and I must not be neglecting it. I could lap a drop of whisky too," he added, plaintively, "if it wouldn't be inconveniencing you."

"That's just what it would."

"Indade?"

"Yes; till I find Johnson," said I, with a wink.

He gave a pleasant laugh and clapped me on the shoulder.

"'Tis queer; mighty queer. I was deceived for onst. But you have the foine presence of a plutocrat, sor, wid them whiskers of yours! Begorrah, and I only had them darling whiskers I'd be driving a practice and a pair of blood horses in Dublin this minute, instead of wasting my substance in the streets of Sumpter City. It's the smoothness of my cheeks that's been the ruin of me intoirely."

"Guess," said I, "that was the gift God gave you?"

"Ah!—the Saxon slang!" and he turned his nose up. "But listen, and I'll tell you my story. I was bred up for a docther. But it's me innocent, smooth face and moild blue infant's eyes that's always stood in the way of success. Sure and I was ill-advised to study obstetrics, and the appearance of me was fatal to the schame. So I abandoned the profession and took up with play-acting, and away to the States, like one or two of me countrymen before me. But Shiny Kidd (he was the manager of our troop, and a thayfe at that—the curse of Cromwell go after him!) eloped over at Spokane with two weeks' salary and the leading lady. So the company took up a contract to get the harvest in for a farmer way down the Snake River. It didn't befit me dignity, after playing Othello, to be slaving like a negro in the fields, whereby there was rude remarks made. So I came down here, and what with rye whisky and poker, and a confiding timpriment, I'm claned out of the little I had. And now, sor, you know me distressful history," said he, "and may it be a warning to you. But how is it an illigant gintleman like yourself is seeking Mr. Johnson?"

There was a way with Mick Mahafferty enough to soften a stone flung at him, and I just tumbled to the fascination of it, and told him what troubled me and all about it. And then I broke my ten-dollar bill and we had a drink together.

"Me friend," said he to me, after a little, "I've got a schame in my brain I'd like foine to give a chanst to."

"And what may that be?"

"A schame to make money."

"Spout," said I.

"Listen, then. There's two weak points underlying human nature in this cold, crool world. The name of the one is Charity, and of t'other Curiosity. 'Tis not charity I'd be appealing to at all, at all."

"Nor me either."

"But curiosity," said he; "the contimptable curiosity of me fellow-craytures presents a fine scope for enterprise. Faith, now, remimber that great man Mr. Barnum—did you ever read his autobiography? Sure 'tis a gospel for such as you and me and, say, isn't it a Museum we ought to be after starting?"

"And what will you be starting a Museum with, that hasn't a red cent in your pocket to buy a stuffed mermaid or a two-headed lamb?"

"Don't trouble at all, at all. Lave it to Mick Mahafferty who's asking a partner, wid whiskers like your own, to give it a tone and take the money at the door."

I pricked up my ears at that. "If it's taking money?" I insinuated.

"Av coorse it is. It's taking money."

"Say on," said I.

He looked at me kinder curious like and asked: "Did you ever hear of a Reliquorium?"

"A how much?"

"A Reliquorium."

"What's that, anyhow?"

"A sort of Walhalla of wonders like. Wholesome, homely things to timpt dacent folk in."

"As how?"

"As relics. The relics of remarkable men what's dead and gone."

"I don't take."

"Sure then," said he, sort of shyly, "I've a few specimens in my pocket I've been after collecting. Here's a horse-shoe, for instance, as I picked up for luck—bad cess to it that brought me none. I've had the fancy it might have belonged to the Jook of Wellington's charger, Copenhagen, at the Battle of Waterloo."

"But you picked it up?"

"Whisht!" he whispered. "We wouldn't be after letting everyone into our sacrets." Then he winked his eye, and Mick could put a whole column of intelligence into a drop of his eyelid. "And this rusty ould nail——"

"Well?"

"There was a woman called Deborah ——" said he, and broke off, screwing up his forehead and reflecting mighty deep—"but maybe the nail's not long enough for that. And there's *Mayflower* nails—but they're too common. I'm told there's a manufactory for them down to Salem. Call it the nail from which Pontius Pilate hanged himself—the rogue he was! And mentioning hanging, here's a bit of rope"—he drew a piece about ten inches long from his pocket—"'tis a pity it isn't long enough for a complete halter. But it might have been a bit of one, mightn't it? Think, now, of a lady it would fit on to."

"IT MIGHT HAVE BELONGED TO THE JOOK OF WELLINGTON'S CHARGER."

"It will fit on to your neck," said I, "if you try to gammon folks in this way."

"Divil a bit," cried Mick. "It's my opinion Mrs. Manning, the murderess, what sent the wearing of black satin out of fashion, is the very woman! Death in its violent forms always presents a pleasing divarsion to the ladies. 'Tis settled then—this is the very piece of rope that hanged poor Mrs. Manning, God rest her!"

"I wouldn't be you to tell people that."

"Lave it to Mick to hold his own," he said, complacently. "See this slip of a toothpick?" he went on, taking one out from between his lips; "it looks as if it might ha' belonged to you or me. There's tons of toothpicks like that, I'll allow. But supposing it was found in the waistcoat pocket of President Abraham Lincoln the night he was outrageously assassinated—isn't there a power of American citizens would pay ten cents for the privilege of admoiring the precious relic? Don't tell me! And pens—quill-pens; thanks be to God and the geese, they're asy found. One that was used to sign the Declaration of Independence, eh? And another the same what Poe wrote 'The Raven' with. (Did ye ever read 'The Raven'? A foine pome, but not strictly true: a pote should sing the truth or nothing.) And then there's Washington and Napoleon—bedad! We mustn't be laving them out of the Reliquorium! There's an odd button on me coat. Sure no one could tell it from one of the Gineral's after he retired from the cares of State. And Napoleon's bootlace—was it button or lace boots they wore in them days? But I'm thinking there's few here in Sumpter City could tell. And an ould bootlace isn't far to fetch. Steady a bit! Sure me luck is turning, for here's a round pebble come to hand in the nick of time" (he had kicked it with his foot as we were walking along). "From Palestine, in the country of the Philistines. I wouldn't go for to declare it was the identical pebble David killed the giant Goliath wid—but from the same locality, d'ye mind? It illustrates the nature of the peculiar pebbles of Palestine, and helps the pious mind to form a plasing picture of the same. Be jaybers!" he cried, joyfully, "give me a couple of hours, and I could provide an illigant Reliquorium that anyone would pay ten cents to look at, and not grudge it."

Well, sir (said Doolittle), that was about the size of Micky Mahafferty's little "schame" for making money, and, although it may seem cussed foolishness to you, he

bunkumed me into joining him with my ten dollars.

We hired an empty store, borrowed some shelves and tables and an old curtain or two, and Mick just invented the relics as fast as I could write their descriptions on the tickets. There was a matter of two hundred, most everything you could hanker to see, from the jawbone of Samson's ass to a hairpin used by Queen Victoria. It made an oncommon fine show, more'n you'd credit unless you'd paid to go in.

I allow I felt kinder proud when it was all ready, and Mick said to me, "Remimber, honey, you're the Boss. Professor Doolittle, of Boston, Massachusetts. And I'm the hired boy that goes round to see that the folks stale nothing. And the name of the trate is the Royal Reliquorium—ten cents admission."

We bought five yards of calico, and painted the name on big, and fixed it up on two poles outside the door; and then Mick and I took up our stations and began to halloa:—

"Hi! Hi! Hi! This way, ladies and gents, to the Royal Reliquorium! Hi! Hi! Hi!"

Then Mick began his patter.

"Free to iverybody! Free to iverybody! And only ten cents a head and a trate at that! Yes, sor—that's right. Ten cents for your head, where your eyes are, that's going to be opened; and nothing for your body, what's allowed to enter free. Free to iverybody. Step in and see the wonders. Nivver was their aqual collected before, and nivver will ye have the chanst again. The only true, original, genuine, and certificated relics of the most remarkable men and women of all the countries in the world. Sure there's a bit of the holy whalebone from the fish that swallowed Jonah. And there's the very pipe that John Brown smoked at Harper's Ferry. And there's the stockings of Julius Cæsar when he first set fut in England. And the pocket-handkerchee of Stonewall Jackson, which he blew his nose wid on the battlefield of Victory. And there's a lock of Queen Elizabeth's hair—faith, now, 'tis the same illigant colour as me own! And there's a bit of the walking-stick of George III., that he shook when they told him to drop the tay-tax. And the blessed toothpick of President Abraham Lincoln, with the nibble of his teeth upon it! What more will you be wanting? And yet 'tis only a taste of the trate I'm prating. Seeing's believing, so pay your dime and take your time, and step up and swim in the sea of sights that's here in the Royal Reliquorium."

By the time he had trotted that lot out there were quite a few citizens collected; and first one pulls out his bit, and then another, and then a third, and after that it was like a flock of sheep, and we had the show humming lively as a hive of bees.

"AS SOON AS MICK GOT 'EM INSIDE HE TOOK 'EM IN HAND."

As soon as Mick got 'em inside he took 'em in hand, and marshalled them and away round, pattering for all he was worth. I never knew a man to answer questions like him. You'd almost think he'd contrived 'em

himself. I could hear the folk laughing, same as at the clown in a circus. And when he bowed 'em out there was a grin on their faces as 'ud do a sorry man more good than whisky neat.

Well! Such is human nature, the thing caught on like a joke. Seeing as how they'd been skinned and sold, those that had paid wanted for others to be gammoned as well, so that the laugh shouldn't be confined to themselves.

"Send your friends to help a poor orphan," said Mick, tipping 'em a wink; "I'm dry with spaking, and it's only a small commission the Professor allows me. And sure 'tis comforting to have fellows in misfortune when the laugh's against you."

That did it, and never a word did they let on, but just told all their fellow-citizens there was the alfiredest show up-town, what no one should miss. And in less than half an hour we had the room full and people fighting to get in.

"Hi! Hi! Hi! This way, ladies and gents," I kept halloaing. "This way for the Royal Reliquorium. Don't lose the chanst. Pay your dime and squeeze in while there's standing room. Hi! Hi! Hi!"

A few of the folks took it serious, but most of 'em otherwise. Those as took it serious said it was just the remarkablest collection of curiosities they'd ever seen; and those that took it otherwise said the same. So both parties was satisfied, and likewise Mick and me. Only, I'd no time to express my opinion, being too busy raking in the dollars.

I guess we might ha' run that show three days with a change of bill, only fer a derned blacksmith what hadn't any sense of humour. He came in about six o'clock, when Mick was starting for about the twentieth time to speak his piece, which he'd come to reel it off like a lecturer. The blacksmith shoved his way to the front, and as bad luck would have it, 'twere the hoss-shoe Mickey was on to.

"This here horse-shoe," said he, p'inting to it with a broom-handle, "belonged to the Jook of Wellington's famous charger, Copenhagen, what carried him through the Battle of Waterloo on the day that decided the destinies of Europe. Conceive what might have happened now if Copenhagen had cast that shoe and gone lame. Faith, Europe might be trembling under the heel of the Corsican Usurper at this moment! Picture to your mind's eye the mad flight of this historical relic over the ground that was strewed with the corpses of soldiers, thick as thaves!"

The blacksmith picked up the shoe and began to examine it kinder curiously. Then he asked:—

"I reckon you allowed this shoe was at the Battle of Waterloo?"

"I did, me friend. It was on the near hind hoof of the Jook's charger, Copenhagen."

"Git," snorted the blacksmith, "it's a lie!"

"Well, sor, and if it is, it's an unintentional one. It might ha' been the front fut shoe."

"Scut!" cried the blacksmith, and turning to the audience, "See here," said he, "I made this shoe myself!"

"Be jaybers and ye did?" cried Mick, as quick as lightning. "Glory! Glory! Listen to his sacred tistimony! It clane bates everything! Only to think you should be alive and well, darling, all this time, and here to give your evidence. By me soul there's not a relic in the Royal Reliquorium to aqual yourself, sor. See here, I'll give you a dollar to stand on a stool and be admired for the farrier what shod the Great Jook's charger for the Battle of Waterloo!"

At this the folks began to roar with laughter, and I thought it was going to blow over pleasant. But the blacksmith lost his temper, and shouted out it was all a swindle and he intended to have his money back.

"A swindle!" cried Mick, firing up mighty indignant. "Is it insulting honest folk you'd be after?"

"Gimme back my dime, dern ye!"

"Sor, I demand an apology," said Mick, very dignified.

"Git, ye gutter-snipe! Gimme back my money or I'll bust your show!"

"Phwat! You tormenting blackguard, calling me names like that! Me that offered ye a dollar for the lie ye told!"

"A lie, ye say? Then take that!" roared the blacksmith, and hurled the hoss shoe at Mick, and followed it with the immortal Shakespeare's inkpot and the hub of one of Pharaoh's chariot-wheels.

"Hands off, ye tasing vandal," screamed Mick, like a wild Injun. "Them's untold treasures you're making free wid! Avic! Avic! Help me to save 'em! Here, Professor! Professor, dear! In wid ye quick! The show's lifting!"

I rushed in, but was too late. Just as I opened the door poor Mick got Christopher Columbus's hair-brush slap in the stomach,

and he kinder lost his head over the shock of it; and in another second the two of them were pelting each other with the relics, as if they was stones; and the crowd laughing, and clapping, and stamping their feet, and shoving 'em on same as at a street fight.

"Take that, ye heathen!" cried Mick, as he banged the blacksmith over the head with a half-charred fagot what had been used at the burning of Joan of Arc.

The blacksmith gave a howl of rage. "And you that!" he retorted, and up with a bucket of holy water from the River Jordan and emptied it over Mick's head.

"Ye spalpeen," spluttered Mick. "It's Oliver Cromwell's own boots I'll brain ye wid, as isn't fit to black 'em," and let drive with an old pair of elastic sides he'd raked out of a dust-heap.

Thereupon the blacksmith collared hold of the jawbone of Samson's ass, and closed with Mick, asking him what it felt to be like a Philistine!

Poor Mickey was getting the worst of it, when I got in between and parted 'em.

"The saints be praised. 'Tis the Professor himself," he panted. "Let me introjooce you to him, sor. 'Tis he can answer all your hard questions. Me head aches with talking, and it's time for tay." And with that he vamoosed to the rear.

"Are you the Boss of this show?" asked the blacksmith, lumping up to me like a grizzly.

"Not me," said I, prompt as ready money.

"MICK GOT CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS'S HAIR-BRUSH SLAP IN THE STOMACH."

"It belongs to Phantom Skilligrew and Company, wind-engine manufacturers."

"I guess it du," said the blacksmith, and with that he set deliberate to work and pelted me and Mick right out of the premises with most everything you could fancy, from the lost rib of Adam to a chunk off the North Pole. And the way the people laughed, as they saw it sort of raining relics upon us—wal, it were ongenerous.

Yes, sir (said Doolittle), that kinder closed the show. 'Twas an "Imposing Ceremony," as Mick called it—but then he also called the show "imposing." But we had a hundred and thirteen dollars out of it and a smart notion. Mick and me ran Reliquoriums in all the cities out West for the next three years, until we saved enough to buy a steam organ and a merry-go-round. And after that——but here's Minneapolis, and I guess I've got to change cars. Don't forget Doolittle and Mahafferty's Dime Museum next time you're down to Chicago.

A Curious Electrical Display.

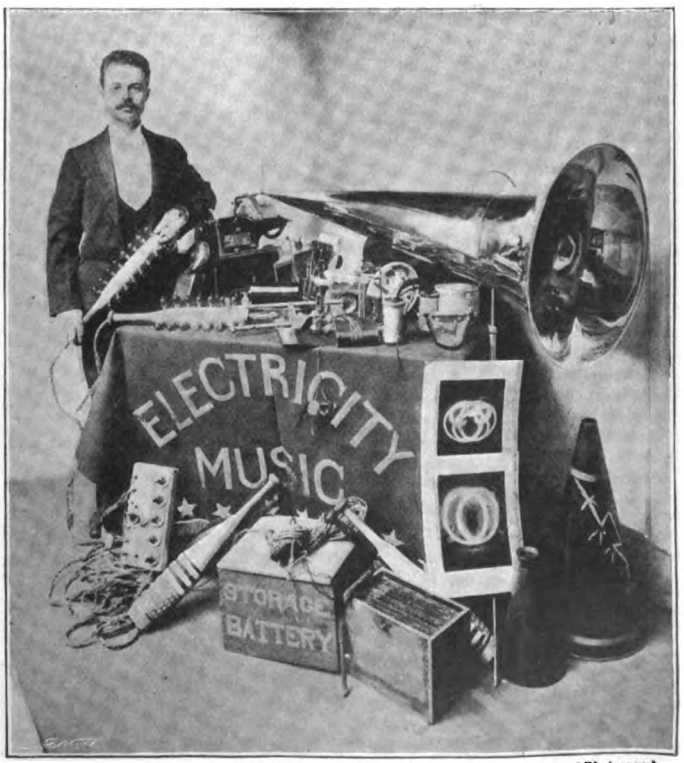
By Harold J. Shepstone.

A CURIOUS and ingenious method of entertaining the public by the aid of electricity has certainly been introduced by Mr. George W. Patterson, of Chicago. This gentleman has devised a means of swinging electrically-lighted Indian clubs in such a way as to produce startling, yet beautiful, spectacular effects. Although this kind of electrical display with Indian clubs is entirely new so far as the public is concerned, Mr. Patterson has given much time and thought to the subject, and his entertainments have not reached their present high degree of excellence and novelty without a great deal of patient study of that vast and marvellous subject which we call electricity.

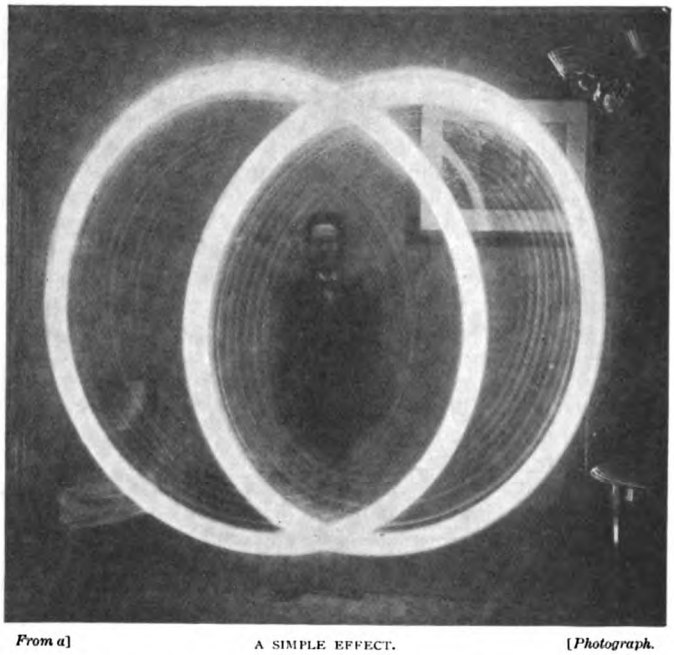
Until very recently Mr. Patterson used to give displays with Indian clubs to which flaming torches were attached. It was the success which attended these entertainments that led him to devise a means for obtaining a more elaborate and effective display. The only thing which could possibly help him to obtain this end was electricity, and that he has succeeded in his endeavours is well evidenced from our set of unique photographs, which illustrate some of his pretty spectacular effects.

In our first photograph we are introduced to Mr. Patterson and all the paraphernalia necessary to an entertainment. One of the greatest difficulties which this electrical entertainer has had to face was the securing of a portable battery of high voltage and light weight. For some time past Mr. Patterson has been unable to give his performances except in halls and houses wired for electrical illumination ; now, however, this drawback has been overcome, and Mr. Patterson can amuse the public with his electrical illuminations in any hall or theatre, and also give exhibitions of his skill in private houses and other places. This has been rendered easy of accomplishment by a storage battery which he has himself designed and built. This battery, which has evoked much comment from eminent electricians, who have been struck with its wonderful powers, is seen in our photograph. It weighs 35lb., has thirty-two volts normal, and a capacity of ten ampères at about twenty-five volts. It is of such convenient size that it can be easily carried by one person.

If one looks carefully into our view, they will detect the small electric lamps which decorate the Indian clubs. These clubs are made in two parts, the split being lengthwise. A flexible cable of five wires leads into the club handles through a rubber tube, the wiring being cleverly concealed. Three series of eight three-candle-power miniature lamps are set in small, specially turned brass sockets, the length of the club, so the lamps stand out at right angles to its surface. As the little globes are coloured, no fewer than six series of different colours are obtained when the current is turned on.



From a] MR. PATTERSON AND HIS APPARATUS. *[Photograph.*

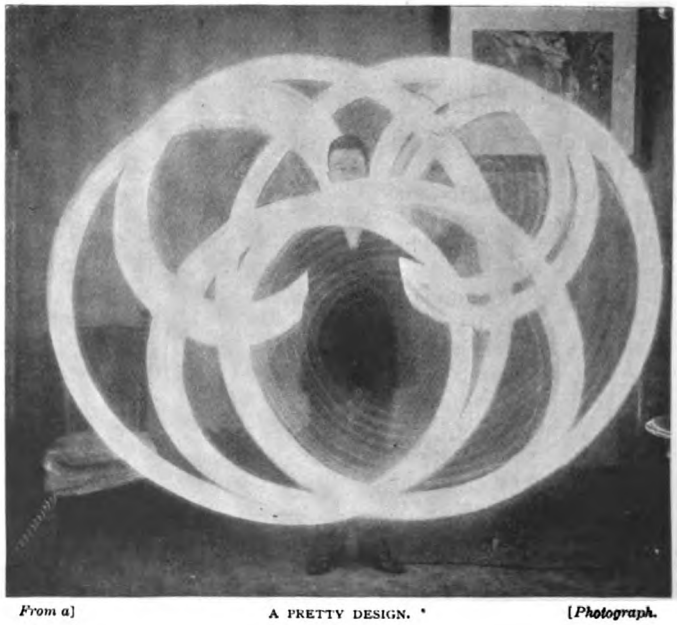


From a] A SIMPLE EFFECT. *[Photograph.*

To give a display the room is darkened, of course, and Mr. Patterson, taking his stand in front of the audience, turns on the current and swings the clubs with the most wonderful results. In the next photograph, which is one of a series of Mr. Patterson's numerous "figures," we notice two distinct "O's," with a very thick outer circle or ring. This larger circle is produced by a thirty-two candle-power, fifty volt lamp which is usually run on 110 volts, fixed to the tip of each club. Some idea of the power of these two lights, which are necessary to make the figures, may be gauged from the fact that they are too dazzling for the naked eye when lighted and stationary, and are so powerful that they are capable of illuminating an entire church or public hall of average size. The smaller circles of light shown in our illustration are the reflections of the miniature lamps on the body of the clubs.

In addition to this pair of electrically-lighted clubs, Mr. Patterson also uses fancy ones in his displays, made of black wood and ornamented with strips of silver. Another pair, which may be detected in our first photograph, are those designed to represent the American flag. Each of these latter contains a music-box. The torch clubs Mr. Patterson made himself. They are of regular shape, with long handles, painted with pegamoid or aluminium paint, giving them the appearance of silver. At the ends are fixed wire screens of spherical shape, filled with asbestos fibre, which is saturated with gasoline before using. These make brilliant effects in the dark, and will burn nicely for about five minutes. Mr. Patterson claims that they are the only pair of the kind in the world, and are entirely safe, whereas the ordinary torch club is not, as cotton is used instead of asbestos. In some of the halls and concert-rooms of Chicago where he has given performances, Mr. Patterson has swung his clubs before a conical mirror reflector, which acted as a powerful footlight, and also threw upon the wall behind him the shadow of a giant club-swinger.

A pretty design produced by lighted clubs



From a] A PRETTY DESIGN. *[Photograph.*

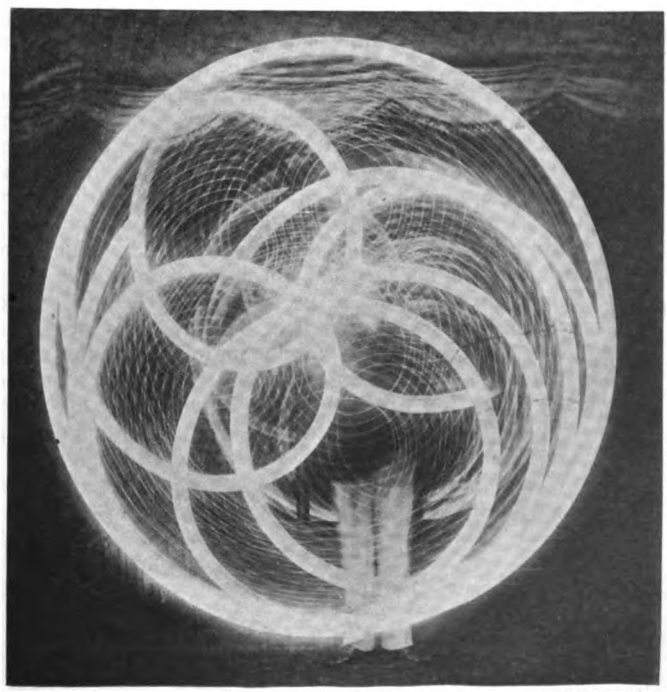
From a] AN ARTISTIC EFFECT. *[Photograph.*

in a darkened hall is seen in our third photograph. The clubs are always swung to music, so that the effect to the audience is still more pleasing. The patterns or figures which may be obtained by the swinging of the clubs are almost infinite in variety. The lights on the clubs are under the control of an operator behind the scenes, who turns on and off the lights of both clubs by means of a switchboard.

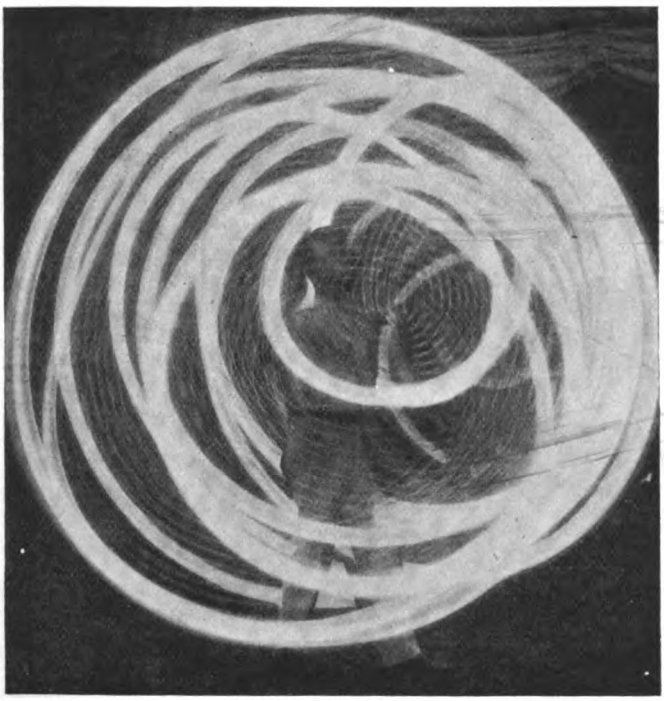
Mr. Patterson is a recognised expert in the swinging of Indian clubs, which we can well believe after glancing at the illustrations which accompany this article. He is thoroughly at home with a pair of these wooden implements hovering around his head, and makes a novel picture as the large yet graceful circles of light flash all round him. In order to produce such a charming picture as seen in our next photograph, the clubs, of course, have to be swung fairly rapidly. Indeed, it would be impossible to obtain so many circles with one pair of clubs unless they are swung quickly, while the grace and style of the whole effect speak volumes for Mr. Patterson's ability as a club-swinger. His club-swinging has rightly been termed "poetry in motion."

Our photographs, it may be added, were taken while Mr. Patterson was swinging his clubs at ordinary speed, by the light of the incandescent lamps studded on the clubs. The time of the exposure was from five to ten seconds. Great credit is undoubtedly due to the photographer who has furnished us with practically exact miniature facsimiles of the various displays. The only thing we can complain of is that we are not treated to the numerous other electrical features which go to make up an ordinary performance. There is the telephone, for instance, with megaphone attachment, through which Mr. Patterson sings from a distant room.

Then there is also the electrical storm, which lacks nothing but buckets of water to



From a] A COMPLICATION. *[Photograph.*



From a] A "RUNNING FIGURE." *[Photograph.*

make it complete. The storm begins with distant heat lightning, simulated by well-distributed Geissler tubes, gradually increasing to the fiercest of chain or "zig-zag" lightning, with corresponding gradation of thunder, the latter being produced in the usual manner by a "thunder-sheet" of iron. The nearer lightning is produced by the direct arching of carbons in Mr. Patterson's hands. The arc is struck in a small box from which the light is thrown by a lens through a cardboard disc having lightning forms cut into it. The disc can be revolved to any form and the light flashed out in any direction. The effect, as may be imagined, is very startling, especially as it is accompanied by the fiercest thunder, and a sound of dashing rain, the latter being produced by skilfully manipulating a circular vessel into which peas are constantly poured.

To add to the terrors of the scene Mr. Patterson laughingly sings "The Lightning King" through the megaphone, the horn of which is so prominently seen on the table in our first illustration. As the storm abates the more cheerful tune of "Anchored" is heard through the disturbed elements. No sooner is quietude restored than a perfect double rainbow gradually appears across the hall, and is dissolved by a water rheostat by sending the rays of a single-loop filament incandescent lamp through a prism. The colours come out beautifully; when at their brightest the lamp is run greatly over voltage. By turning the lamp slightly, so that the filament is not in direct line with the prism, lights from two points strike the prism, producing two rainbows, as sometimes seen in the sky. This part of the performance is greatly appreciated by the audience, so realistic are all the details of a thunderstorm carried out.

However novel thunderstorms made to order may sound, Mr. Patterson is not yet fully satisfied that he has reached the limit of his powers as an electrical entertainer, and has great hopes of producing more startling novelties before very long. In addition to the thunderstorm there are other curious and ingenious electrical displays, which it would be impossible to describe here.

One of his great plans is to produce ozone electrically, and blow it gently among his audience by means of electric fans. With the aid of an atomizer and apple blossom perfume he believes he can reproduce the genuine air of a country orchard. Should this new wizard of electricity ever come to London and give exhibitions of his wonderful skill as a conjuring electrician, those who long for a breath of country air need only go to one of Mr. Patterson's performances, close his eyes, and imagine beautiful blossoms and graceful trees, as he drinks in the sweet perfume of a distant country orchard.

Hilda Wade.

By Grant Allen.

XI.—THE EPISODE OF THE OFFICER WHO UNDERSTOOD PERFECTLY.

AFTER our fortunate escape from the clutches of our too-admiring Tibetan hosts, we wound our way slowly back through the Maharajah's territory towards Sir Ivor's head-quarters. On the third day out from the lamasery we camped in a romantic Himalayan valley—a narrow, green glen, with a brawling stream running in white cataracts and rapids down its midst. We were able to breathe freely now: we could enjoy the great tapering deodars that rose in ranks on the hillsides, the snow-clad needles of ramping rock that bounded the view to north and south, the feathery bamboo-jungle that fringed and half-obscured the mountain torrent, whose cool music—alas, fallaciously cool—was borne to us through the dense screen of waving foliage. Lady Meadowcroft was so delighted at having got clear away from those murderous and saintly Tibetans that for a while she almost forgot to grumble. She even condescended to admire the deep-cleft ravine in which we bivouacked for the night, and to admit that the orchids which hung from the tall trees were as fine as any at her florist's in Piccadilly. "Though how they can have got them out here already, in this outlandish place—the most fashionable kinds—when we in England have to grow them with such care in expensive hot-houses," she said, "really passes my comprehension."

She seemed to think that orchids originated in Covent Garden.

Early next morning I was engaged with one of my native men in lighting the fire to boil our kettle—for in spite of all misfortunes we still made tea with creditable punctuality—when a tall and good-looking Nepaulese approached us from the hills, with cat-like tread, and stood before me in an attitude of profound supplication. He was a well-dressed young man, like a superior native servant: his face was broad and flat, but kindly and good-humoured. He salaamed many times, but still said nothing.

"Ask him what he wants," I cried, turning to our fair-weather friend, the cook.

The deferential Nepaulese did not wait to be asked. "Salaam, sahib," he said, bowing again very low till his forehead almost touched the ground. "You are Eulopean doctor, sahib?"

"I am," I answered, taken aback at being thus recognised in the forests of Nepaul. "But how in wonder did you come to know it?"

"You camp near here when you pass dis way before, and you doctor little native girl, who got sore eyes. All de country here tell you is very great physician. So I come and to see if you will turn aside to my village to help us."

"Where did you learn English?" I exclaimed, more and more astonished.

"I is servant one time at British Lesident's at de Maharajah's city. Pick up English dere. Also pick up plenty lupee. Velly good business at British Lesident's. Now gone back home to my own village, letired gentleman." And he drew himself up with conscious dignity.

I surveyed the retired gentleman from head to foot. He had an air of distinction, which not even his bare toes could altogether mar. He was evidently a person of local importance. "And what did you want me to visit your village for?" I inquired, dubiously.

"White traveller sahib ill dere, sir. Vely ill: got plague. Great first-class sahib, all same like Governor. Ill fit to die: send me out all times to try find Eulopean doctor."

"Plague?" I repeated, startled. He nodded.

"Yes, plague: all same like dem hab him so bad down Bombay way."

"Do you know his name?" I asked; for though one does not like to desert a fellow-creature in distress, I did not care to turn aside from my road on such an errand, with Hilda and Lady Meadowcroft, unless for some amply sufficient reason.

The retired gentleman shook his head in

the most emphatic fashion. "How me know?" he answered, opening the palms of his hands as if to show he had nothing concealed in them. "Forget Eulopean name all times so easily. And traveller sahib name very hard to lemember. Not got English name. Him Eulopean foleigner."

"A European foreigner!" I repeated. "And you say he is seriously ill? Plague is no trifle. Well, wait a minute: I'll see what the ladies say about it. How far off is your village?"

He pointed with his hand, somewhat vaguely, to the hillside. "Two hours' walk," he answered, with the mountaineer's habit of reckoning distance by time, which extends, under the like circumstances, the whole world over.

I went back to the tents, and consulted Hilda and Lady Meadowcroft. Our spoilt child pouted, and was utterly averse to any détour of any sort. "Let's get back straight to Ivor," she said, petulantly. "I've had enough of camping out. It's all very well in its way for a week: but when they begin to talk about cutting your throat and all that, it ceases to be a joke and becomes a wee bit uncomfortable. I want my feather bed. I object to their villages."

"But consider, dear," Hilda said, gently. "This traveller is ill, all alone in a strange land. How can Hubert desert him? It is a doctor's duty to do what he can to alleviate pain and to cure the sick. What would we have thought ourselves, when we were at the lamasery, if a body of European travellers had known we were there, imprisoned and in danger of our lives, and had passed by on the other side without attempting to rescue us?"

Lady Meadowcroft knit her forehead. "That was Us," she said, with an impatient nod, after a pause—"and this is another person. You can't turn aside for everybody who's ill in all Nepaul. And plague, too!—so horrid! Besides, how do we know this isn't another plant of these hateful people to lead us into danger?"

"Lady Meadowcroft is quite right," I said, hastily. "I never thought about that. There may be no plague, no patient at all. I will go up with this man alone, Hilda, and find out the truth. It will only take me five hours at most. By noon I shall be back with you."

"What? And leave us here unprotected among the wild beasts and the savages?" Lady Meadowcroft cried, horrified. "In the midst of the forest! Dr. Cumberledge, how can you?"

"You are *not* unprotected," I answered, soothing her. "You have Hilda with you. She is worth ten men. And besides, our Nepaulese are fairly trustworthy."

Hilda bore me out in my resolve. She was too much of a nurse, and had imbibed too much of the true medical sentiment, to let me desert a man in peril of his life among tropical jungle. So, in spite of Lady Meadowcroft, I was soon winding my way up a steep mountain track, overgrown with creeping Indian weeds, on my road to the still problematical village graced by the residence of the retired gentleman.

After two hours' hard climbing we reached it at last. The retired gentleman led the way to a house in a street of the little wooden hamlet. The door was low: I had to stoop to enter it. I saw in a moment this was indeed no trick. On a native bed, in a corner of the one room, a man lay desperately ill: a European, with white hair and with a skin well bronzed by exposure to the tropics. Ominous dark spots beneath the epidermis showed the nature of the disease. He tossed restlessly as he lay, but did not raise his fevered head or look at my conductor. "Well, any news of Ram Das?" he asked at last, in a parched and feeble voice. Parched and feeble as it was, I recognised it instantly. The man on the bed was Sebastian—no other!

"No, no news of Lam Das," the retired gentleman replied, with an unexpected display of womanly tenderness. "Lam Das clean gone: not come any more. But I bling you back Eulopean doctor, sahib."

Sebastian did not look up from his bed even then. I could see he was more anxious about a message from his scout than about his own condition. "The rascal!" he moaned, with his eyes closed tight. "The rascal! he has betrayed me." And he tossed uneasily.

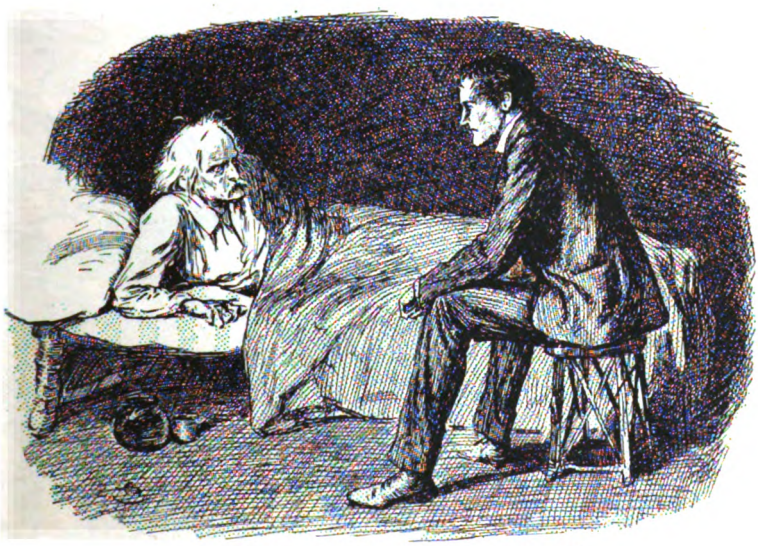
I looked at him and said nothing. Then I seated myself on a low stool by the bedside and took his hand in mine to feel his pulse. The wrist was thin and wasted. The face, too, I noticed, had fallen away greatly. It was clear that the malignant fever which accompanies the disease had wreaked its worst on him. So weak and ill was he, indeed, that he let me hold his hand, with my fingers on his pulse, for half a minute or more without ever opening his eyes or displaying the slightest curiosity at my presence. One might have thought that European doctors abounded in Nepaul, and that I had been attending him for a

week, with "the mixture as before" at every visit.

"Your pulse is weak and very rapid," I said, slowly, in a professional tone. "You seem to me to have fallen into a perilous condition."

At the sound of my voice he gave a sudden start. Yet even so, for a second, he did not open his eyes. The revelation of my presence seemed to come upon him as in a dream. "Like Cumberledge's," he muttered to himself, gasping. "Exactly like Cumberledge's. . . . But Cumberledge is dead . . . I must be delirious. . . . If I didn't *know* to the contrary, I could have sworn it was Cumberledge's!"

I spoke again, bending over him. "How long have the glandular swellings been



"CUMBERLEDGE! COME BACK TO LIFE, THEN!"

present, Professor?" I asked, with quiet deliberativeness.

This time he opened his eyes sharply, and looked up in my face. He swallowed a great gulp of surprise. His breath came and went. He raised himself on his elbows and stared at me with a fixed stare. "Cumberledge!" he cried: "Cumberledge! Come back to life, then! They told me you were dead! And here you are, Cumberledge!"

"*Who* told you I was dead?" I asked, sternly.

He stared at me, still in a dazed way. He was more than half comatose. "Your guide, Ram Das," he answered at last, half incoherently. "He came back by himself. Came back, without you. He swore to me he had seen all your throats cut in Tibet. He alone had escaped. The Buddhists had massacred you."

"He told you a lie," I said, shortly.

"I thought so. I thought so. And I sent him back for confirmatory evidence. But the rogue has never brought it." He let his head drop on his rude pillow heavily. "Never, never brought it!"

I gazed at him, full of horror: the man was too ill to hear me, too ill to reason, too ill to recognise the meaning of his own words, almost. Otherwise, perhaps, he would hardly have expressed himself quite so frankly. Though to be sure he had said nothing to criminate himself in any way: his action might have been due to anxiety for our safety.

I fixed my glance on him long and dubiously. What ought I to do next? As for Sebastian, he lay with his eyes closed, half oblivious of my presence. The fever had gripped him hard. He shivered, and looked helpless as a child. In such circumstances, the instincts of my profession rose imperative within me. I could not nurse a case properly in this wretched hut. The one thing to be done was to carry the patient down to our camp in the valley. There, at least, we had air and pure running water.

I asked a few questions from the retired gentleman as to the possibility of obtaining sufficient bearers in the village. As I supposed, any number were forthcoming immediately. Your Nepaulese is by nature a

beast of burden: he can carry anything up and down the mountains, and spends his life in the act of carrying.

I pulled out my pencil, tore a leaf from my note-book, and scribbled a hasty note to Hilda: "The invalid is—whom do you think?—Sebastian! He is dangerously ill with some malignant fever: I am bringing him down into camp to nurse: get everything ready for him." Then I handed it over to a messenger, found for me by the retired gentleman, to carry to Hilda. My host himself I could not spare, as he was my only interpreter.

In a couple of hours we had improvised a rough, woven grass hammock as an ambulance couch, had engaged our bearers, and had got Sebastian under way for the camp by the river.

When I arrived at our tents I found Hilda had prepared everything for our patient with her usual cleverness. Not only had she got a bed ready for Sebastian, who was now almost insensible, but she had even cooked some arrowroot from our stores beforehand, so that he might have a little food, with a dash of brandy in it, to recover him after the fatigue of the journey down the mountain. By the time we had laid him out on a mattress in a cool tent, with the fresh air blowing about him, and had made him eat the meal prepared for him, he really began to look comparatively comfortable.

Lady Meadowcroft was now our chief trouble: we did not dare to tell her it was really plague; but she had got near enough back to civilization to have recovered her faculty for profuse grumbling; and the idea of the delay that Sebastian would cause us drove her wild with annoyance. "Only two days off from Ivor," she cried, "and that comfortable bungalow! And now to think we must stop here in the woods a week or ten days for this horrid old Professor! Why can't he get worse at once and die like a gentleman? But, there! with *you* to nurse him, Hilda, he'll never get worse: he couldn't die if he tried: he'll linger on and on for weeks and weeks through a beastly convalescence!"

"Hubert," Hilda said to me, when we were alone once more, "we mustn't keep her here. She will be a hindrance, not a help. One way or another, we must manage to get rid of her."

"How can we?" I asked. "We can't turn her loose upon the mountain roads with a Nepaulese escort. She isn't fit for it. She would be frantic with terror."

"I've thought of that, and I see only one thing possible. I must go on with her myself as fast as we can push to Sir Ivor's place, and then return to help you nurse the Professor."

"WE MUST MANAGE TO GET RID OF HER."

I saw she was right: it was the sole plan open to us. And I had no fear of letting Hilda go off alone with Lady Meadowcroft and the bearers. She was a host in herself, and could manage a party of native servants at least as well as I could.

So Hilda went, and came back again: meanwhile, I took charge of the nursing of Sebastian. Fortunately, I had brought with me a good stock of jungle-medicines in my

little travelling case, including plenty of quinine; and under my careful treatment the Professor passed the crisis and began to mend slowly. The first question he asked me when he felt himself able to talk once more was, "Nurse Wade—what has become of her?"—for he had not yet seen her. I feared the shock for him.

"She is here with me," I answered, in a very measured voice. "She is waiting to be allowed to come and help me in taking care of you."

He shuddered and turned away. His face buried itself in the pillow. I could see some twinge of remorse had seized upon him. At last he spoke. "Cumberledge," he said, in a very low and almost frightened tone, "don't let her come near me! I can't bear it: I can't bear it."

Ill as he was, I did not mean to let him think I was ignorant of his motive. "You can't bear a woman, whose life you have attempted," I said, in my coldest and most deliberate way, "to have a hand in nursing you. You can't bear to let her heap coals of fire on your head. In that, you are right. But, remember, you have attempted *my* life too; you have twice done your best to get me murdered."

He did not pretend to deny it. He was too weak for subterfuges. He only writhed as he lay. "You are a man," he said, shortly, "and she is a woman. That is all the difference." Then he paused for a minute or two. "Don't let her come near me," he moaned once more, in a piteous voice: "don't let her come near me!"

"I will not," I answered. "She shall not come near you. I spare you that. But you will have to eat the food she prepares: and you know *she* will not poison you. You will have to be tended by the servants she chooses: and you know *they* will not murder you. She can heap coals of fire on your head without coming into your tent. Consider that you sought to take her life—and she seeks to save yours! She is as anxious to keep you alive as you are anxious to kill her."

He lay as in a reverie. His long, white hair made his clear-cut, thin face look more unearthly than ever, with the hectic flush of fever upon it. At last he turned to me. "We each work for our own ends," he said, in a weary way. "We pursue our own objects. It suits *me* to get rid of *her*: it suits *her* to keep *me* alive. I am no good to her dead; living, she expects to wring a confession out of me. But she shall not have it. Tenacity of purpose is the one thing I admire in life. She has the tenacity of purpose—and so have I. Cumberledge, don't you see it is a mere duel of endurance between us?"

"And may the just side win," I answered, solemnly.

It was several days later before he spoke to me of it again. Hilda had brought some food to the door of the tent and passed it in to me for our patient. "How is he now?" she whispered.

Sebastian overheard her voice, and, cowering within himself, still managed to answer: "Better, getting better. I shall soon be well now. You have carried your point. You have cured your enemy."

"Thank God for that!" Hilda said, and glided away silently.

Sebastian ate his cup of arrowroot in silence; then he looked at me with wistful, musing eyes. "Cumberledge," he murmured at last, "after all, I can't help admiring that woman. She is the only person who has ever checkmated me. She checkmates me every time. Steadfastness is what I love. Her steadfastness of purpose and her determination move me."

"I wish they would move you to tell the truth," I answered.

He mused again. "To tell the truth!" he muttered, moving his head up and down. "I have lived for science: shall I wreck all now? There are truths which it is better to hide than to proclaim. Uncomfortable truths—truths that never should have been—truths which help to make greater truths incredible. But all the same, I cannot help admiring that woman. She has Yorke-Bannerman's intellect, with a great deal more than Yorke-Bannerman's force of will. Such firmness! such energy! such resolute patience! She is a wonderful creature. I can't help admiring her!"

I said no more to him just then. I thought it better to let nascent remorse and nascent admiration work out their own natural effects unimpeded. For I could see our enemy was beginning to feel some sting of remorse. Some men are below it: Sebastian thought himself above it: I felt sure he was mistaken.

Yet even in the midst of these personal preoccupations I saw that our great teacher was still, as ever, the pure man of science. He noted every symptom and every change of the disease with professional accuracy. He observed his own case, whenever his mind was clear enough, as impartially as he would have observed any outside patient's. "This is a rare chance, Cumberledge," he

whispered to me once, in an interval of delirium. "So few Europeans have ever had the complaint, and probably none who were competent to describe the specific subjective and psychological symptoms. The delusions one gets, as one sinks into the coma, for example, are of quite a peculiar type - delusions of wealth and of absolute power, most exhilarating and magnificent. I think myself a millionaire or a Prime Minister. Be sure you make a note of that - in case I die. If I recover, of course, I can write an exhaustive monograph on the whole history of the disease in the *British Medical Journal*. But if I die, the task of chronicling these interesting observations will devolve upon you. A most exceptional chance! You are much to be congratulated."

"You *must* not die, Professor," I cried, thinking more, I will confess, of Hilda Wade than of himself: "you must live. . . . . to report this case for science." I used what I thought the strongest lever I knew for him.

He closed his eyes dreamily. "For science! Yes, for science! There you strike the right chord! What have I not dared and done for science? But, in case I die, Cumberledge, be sure you collect the notes I took as I was sickening - they are most important for the history and etiology of the disease. I made them hourly. And don't forget the main points to be observed as I am dying. You know what they are: this is a rare, rare chance! I congratulate you on being the man who has the first opportunity ever afforded us of questioning an intelligent European case, a case where the patient is fully capable of describing with accuracy his symptoms and his sensations in medical phraseology."

He did not die, however. In about another week he was well enough to move. We carried him down to Mozufferpoor, the first large town in the plains thereabouts, and handed him over for the stage of convalescence to the care of the able and efficient station doctor, to whom my thanks are due for much courteous assistance.

"And now, what do you mean to do?" I asked Hilda, when our patient was placed in other hands, and all was over.

She answered me without one second's hesitation: "Go straight to Bombay, and wait there till Sebastian takes a passage for England."

"He will go home, you think, as soon as he is well enough?"

"Undoubtedly. He has now nothing more to stop in India for."

"Why not as much as ever?"

She looked at me curiously. "It is so hard to explain," she replied, after a moment's pause, during which she had been drumming her little forefinger on the table. "I feel it rather than reason it. But don't you see that a certain change has lately come over Sebastian's attitude? He no longer desires to follow me: he wants to avoid me. That is why I wish more than ever to dog his steps. I feel the beginning of the end has come. I am gaining my point. Sebastian is wavering."

"Then, when he engages a berth, you propose to go by the same steamer?"

"Yes. It makes all the difference. When he tries to follow me, he is dangerous: when he tries to avoid me, it becomes my work in life to follow him. I must keep him in sight every minute now. I must quicken his conscience. I must make him *feel* his own desperate wickedness. He is afraid to face me: that means remorse. The more I compel him to face me, the more the remorse is sure to deepen."

I saw she was right. We took the train to Bombay. I found rooms at the hospitable club, by a member's invitation, while Hilda went to stop with some friends of Lady Meadowcroft's on the Malabar Hill. We waited for Sebastian to come down from the interior and take his passage. Hilda felt sure he would come, with her intuitive certainty.

A steamer, two steamers, three steamers, sailed, and still no Sebastian. I began to think he must have made up his mind to go back some other way. But Hilda was confident, so I waited patiently. At last one morning I dropped in, as I had often done before, at the office of one of the chief steamship companies. It was the very morning when a packet was to sail. "Can I see the list of passengers on the *Vindhya?*" I asked of the clerk, a sandy-haired Englishman, tall, thin, and sallow.

The clerk produced it.

I scanned it in haste. To my surprise and delight, a pencilled entry half-way down the list gave the name, "Professor Sebastian."

"Oh, Sebastian is going by this steamer?" I murmured, looking up.

The sandy-haired clerk hummed and hesitated. "Well, I believe he's going, sir," he answered at last; "but it's a bit uncertain. He's a fidgety man, the Professor. He came down here this morning and asked to see the list, the same as you have done: then he engaged a berth provisionally — 'mind, provisionally,' he said — that's why

his name is only put in on the list in pencil. I take it he's waiting to know whether a party of friends he wishes to meet are going also."

"Or wishes to avoid," I thought to myself, inwardly; but I did not say so. I asked instead, "Is he coming again?"

"Yes, I think so: at 5.30."

"And she sails at seven?"

"At seven, punctually. Passengers must be aboard by half-past six at latest."

"Very good," I answered, making my mind up promptly. "I only called to know the Professor's movements. Don't mention to him that I came. I may look in again myself an hour or two later."

"You don't want a passage, sir? You may be the friend he's expecting."

"No, I don't want a passage—not at present certainly." Then I ventured on a bold stroke. "Look here," I said, leaning across towards him, and assuming a confidential tone, "I am a private detective"—which was perfectly true in essence—"and I'm dogging the Professor, who, for all his eminence, is gravely suspected of a great crime. If you will help me, I will make it worth your while. Let us understand one another. I offer you a five-pound note to say nothing of all this to him."

The sallow clerk's fishy eye glistened. "You can depend upon me," he answered, with an acquiescent nod. I judged that he did not often get the chance of earning some eighty rupees so easily.

I scribbled a hasty note and sent it round to Hilda: "Pack your boxes at once, and hold yourself in readiness to embark on the *Vindhya* at six o'clock precisely." Then I put my own things straight, and waited at the club till a quarter to six. At that time I strolled unconcernedly into the office: a cab outside held Hilda and our luggage. I had arranged it all meanwhile by letter.

"Professor Sebastian been here again?" I asked.

"Yes, sir; he's been here; and he looked over the list again: and he's taken his passage. But he muttered something about eavesdroppers, and said that if he wasn't satisfied when he got on board, he would return at once and ask for a cabin in exchange by the next steamer."

"That will do," I answered, slipping the promised five-pound note into the clerk's open palm, which closed over it convulsively. "Talked about eavesdroppers, did he? Then he knows he's being shadowed. It may console you to learn that you are instrumental in furthering the aims of justice and unmasking a cruel and wicked conspiracy. Now, the next thing is this: I want two berths at once by this very steamer: one for myself—name of Cumberledge; one for a lady—name of Wade: and look sharp about it."

The sandy-haired man did look sharp; and within three minutes we were driving off with our tickets to Prince's Dock landing-stage.

We slipped on board unobtrusively, and instantly took refuge in our respective staterooms, till the steamer was well under way, and fairly out of sight of Kolaba Island.

"LET US UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER."

Only after all chance of Sebastian's avoiding us was gone for ever did we venture up on deck, on purpose to confront him.

It was one of those delicious balmy evenings which one gets only at sea and in the warmer latitudes. The sky was alive with

myriads of twinkling and palpitating stars, which seemed to come and go, like sparks on a fire-back, as one gazed upward into the vast depths and tried to place them. They played hide-and-seek with one another and with the innumerable meteors which shot recklessly every now and again across the field of the firmament, leaving momentary furrows of light behind them. Beneath, the sea sparkled almost like the sky, for every turn of the screw churned up the scintillating phosphorescence in the water, so that countless little jets of living fire seemed to flash and die away at the summit of every wavelet. A tall, spare man in a picturesque cloak, and with long, lank, white hair, leant over the taffrail, gazing at the numberless flashing lights of the surface. As he gazed, he talked on in his clear, rapt voice to a stranger by his side. The voice and the ring of enthusiasm were unmistakable. "Oh, no," he was saying, as we stole up behind him, "that hypothesis, I venture to assert, is no longer tenable by the light of recent researches. Death and decay have nothing to do directly with the phosphorescence of the sea, though they have a little indirectly. The light is due in the main to numerous minute living organisms, most of them bacilli, on which I once made several close observations and crucial experiments. They possess organs which may be regarded as miniature bull's-eye lanterns: and these organs——"

"What a lovely evening, Hubert!" Hilda said to me, in an apparently unconcerned voice, as the Professor reached this point in his exposition.

Sebastian's voice quavered and stammered for a moment. He tried just at first to continue and complete his sentence: "And these organs," he went on, aimlessly, "these bull's-eyes that I spoke about, are so arranged—so arranged—I was speaking on the subject of crustaceans, I think—crustaceans so arranged——" then he broke down utterly and turned sharply round to me. He did not look at Hilda—I think he did not dare; but he faced me with his head down and his long, thin neck protruded, eyeing me from under those overhanging, pent-house brows of his. "You sneak!" he cried, passionately. "You sneak! You have dogged me by false pretences. You have lied to bring this about! You have come aboard under a false name—you and your accomplice!"

I faced him in turn, erect and unflinching. "Professor Sebastian," I answered, in my coldest and calmest tone, "you say what is not true. If you consult the list of passengers by the *Vindhya*, now posted near the companion-ladder, you will find the names of Hilda Wade and Hubert Cumberledge duly entered. We took our passage *after* you inspected the list at the office to see whether our names were there—in order to avoid us. But you cannot avoid us. We do not mean that you shall avoid us. We will dog you now through life—not by lies or subterfuges, as you say, but openly and honestly. It is

"'YOU SNEAK!' HE CRIED, PASSIONATELY."

you who need to slink and cower, not we. The prosecutor need not descend to the sordid shifts of the criminal."

The other passenger had sidled away quietly the moment he saw our conversation was likely to be private; and I spoke in a low voice, though clearly and impressively, because I did not wish for a scene: I was only endeavouring to keep alive the slow, smouldering fire of remorse in the man's bosom. And I saw I had touched him on a spot that hurt. Sebastian drew himself up and answered nothing. For a minute or two he stood erect, with folded arms, gazing moodily before him. Then he said, as if to himself, "I owe the man my life. He nursed me through the plague. If it had not been for that—if he had not tended me so carefully in that valley in Nepaul—I would throw him overboard now—catch him in my arms and throw him overboard! I would—and be hanged for it!"

He walked past us as if he saw us not, silent, erect, moody. Hilda stepped aside and let him pass. He never even looked at her. I knew why: he dared not. Every day now, remorse for the evil part he had played in her life, respect for the woman who had unmasked and outwitted him, made it more and more impossible for Sebastian to face her. During the whole of that voyage, though he dined in the same saloon and paced the same deck, he never spoke to her, he never so much as looked at her. Once or twice their eyes met by accident, and Hilda stared him down: Sebastian's eyelids dropped, and he stole away uneasily. In public, we gave no overt sign of our differences: but it was understood on board that relations were strained: that Professor Sebastian and Dr. Cumberledge had been working at the same hospital in London together; and that owing to some disagreement between them Dr. Cumberledge had resigned—which made it most awkward for them to be travelling together by the same steamer.

We passed through the Suez Canal and down the Mediterranean. All the time, Sebastian never again spoke to us. The passengers, indeed, held aloof from the solitary, gloomy old man, who strode along the quarter-deck with his long, slow stride, absorbed in his own thoughts, and intent only on avoiding Hilda and myself. His mood was unsociable. As for Hilda, her helpful, winning ways made her a favourite with all the women, as her pretty face did with all the men. For the first time in his life, Sebastian seemed to be aware that he was shunned. He retired more and more within himself for company: his keen eye began to lose in some degree its extraordinary fire, his expression to forget its magnetic attractiveness. Indeed, it was only young men of scientific tastes that Sebastian could ever attract: among them, his eager zeal, his single-minded devotion to the cause of

"HIS MOOD WAS UNSOCIABLE."

science, awoke always a responsive chord which vibrated powerfully.

Day after day passed, and we steamed through the Straits and neared the Channel. Our thoughts began to assume a home complexion. Everybody was full of schemes as to what he would do when he reached England. Old Bradshaws were overhauled and trains looked out, on the supposition that we would get in by such an hour on Tuesday. We were steaming along the French coast, off the western promontory of Brittany. The evening was fine, and though, of course, less warm than we had all experienced of late, yet pleasant and summer-like. We watched the distant cliffs of the Finistère mainland and the numerous little islands that lie off the shore, all basking in the unreal glow of a deep red sunset. The first officer was in charge, a very cock-sure and careless young man, handsome and dark-haired: the sort of young man who thought more of creating an impression upon the minds of the lady passengers than of the duties of his position.

"Aren't you going down to your berth?" I asked of Hilda, about half-past ten that night; "the air is so much colder here than you have been feeling it of late, and I'm afraid of your chilling yourself."

She looked up at me with a smile, and drew her little fluffy, white woollen wrap closer about her shoulders. "Am I so very valuable to you, then?" she asked—for I suppose my glance had been a trifle too tender for a mere acquaintance's. "No, thank you, Hubert; I don't think I'll go down, and, if you're wise, you won't go down either. I distrust this first officer. He's a careless navigator, and to-night his head's too full of that pretty Mrs. Ogilvy. He has been flirting with her desperately ever since we left Bombay, and to-morrow he knows he will lose her for ever. His mind isn't occupied with the navigation at all; what *he* is thinking of is how soon his watch will be over, so that he may come down off the bridge on to the quarter-deck to talk to her. Don't you see she's lurking over yonder, looking up at the stars and waiting for him by the compass? Poor child, she has a bad husband, and now she has let herself get too much entangled with this empty young fellow: I shall be glad for her sake to see her safely landed and out of the man's clutches."

"FLIRTING WITH HER DESPERATELY."

As she spoke, the first officer glanced down towards Mrs. Ogilvy, and held out his chronometer with an encouraging smile which seemed to say, "Only an hour and a half more now! At twelve, I shall be with you!"

"Perhaps you're right, Hilda," I answered,

taking a seat beside her and throwing away my cigar. "This is one of the worst bits on the French coast that we're approaching. We're not far off Ushant. I wish the captain were on the bridge instead of this helter-skelter, self-conceited young fellow. He's too cock-sure. He knows so much about seamanship that he could take a ship through any rocks on his course, blindfold—in his own opinion. I always doubt a man who is so much at home in his subject that he never has to think about it. Most things in this world are done by thinking."

"We can't see the Ushant light," Hilda remarked, looking ahead.

"No: there's a little haze about on the horizon, I fancy. See, the stars are fading away. It begins to feel damp. Sea mist in the Channel."

Hilda sat uneasily in her deck-chair. "That's bad," she answered; "for the first officer is taking no more heed of Ushant than of his latter end. He has forgotten the existence of the Breton coast. His head is just stuffed with Mrs. Ogilvy's eyelashes. Very pretty, long eyelashes, too: I don't deny it: but they won't help him to get through the narrow channel. They say it's dangerous."

"Dangerous!" I answered. "Not a bit of it—with reasonable care. Nothing at sea is dangerous—except the inexplicable recklessness of navigators. There's always plenty of sea-room—if they care to take it. Collisions and icebergs, to be sure, are dangers that can't be avoided at times, especially if there's fog about: but I've been enough at sea in my time to know this much at least—that no coast in the world is dangerous except by dint of reckless corner-cutting. Captains of great ships behave exactly like two hansom-drivers in the streets of London: they think they can just shave past without grazing; and they *do* shave past nine times out of ten. The tenth time, they run on the rocks, through sheer recklessness, and lose their vessel: and then, the newspapers always ask the same solemn question—in childish good faith—how did so experienced and able a navigator come to make such a mistake in his reckoning? He made *no* mistake: he simply tried to cut it fine, and cut it too fine for once, with the result that he usually loses his own life and his passengers'. That's all. We who have been at sea understand that perfectly."

Just at that moment another passenger strolled up and joined us—a Bengal Civil servant. He drew his chair over by Hilda's, and began discussing Mrs. Ogilvy's eyes and the first officer's flirtations. Hilda hated gossip, and took refuge in generalities. In three minutes the talk had wandered off to Ibsen's influence on the English drama, and we had forgotten the very existence of the Isle of Ushant.

"The English public will never understand Ibsen," the new-comer said, reflectively, with the omniscient air of the Indian civilian. "He is too purely Scandinavian. He represents that part of the Continental mind which is farthest removed from the English temperament. To him, respectability—our god—is not only no fetish, it is the unspeakable thing, the Moabitish abomination. He will not bow down to the golden image which our British Nebuchadnezzar, King Demos, has made, and which he asks us to worship. And the British Nebuchadnezzar will never get beyond the worship of his Vishnu, respectability, the deity of the pure and blameless ratepayer. So Ibsen must always remain a sealed book to the vast majority of the English people."

"That is true," Hilda answered: "as to his direct influence; but don't you think, indirectly, he is leavening England? A man so wholly out of tune with the prevailing note of English life could only affect it, of course, by means of disciples and popularizers—often even popularizers who but dimly and distantly apprehend his meaning. He must be interpreted to the English by English intermediaries, half Philistine themselves, who speak his language ill, and who miss the greater part of his message. Yet only by such half-hints——Why, what was that? I think I saw something!"

Even as she uttered the words, a terrible jar ran fiercely through the ship from stem to stern. A jar that made one clench one's teeth, and hold one's jaws tight. The jar of a prow that shattered against a rock. I took it all in at a glance. We had forgotten Ushant, but Ushant had not forgotten us: it had revenged itself upon us by revealing its existence.

In a moment all was turmoil and confusion on deck. I cannot describe the scene that followed. Sailors rushed to and fro, unfastening ropes and lowering boats, with admirable discipline. Women shrieked and cried aloud in helpless terror. The voice of the first officer could be heard above the din, endeavouring to atone by courage and coolness in the actual disaster for his recklessness in causing it. Passengers rushed on

deck half clad, and waited for their turn to take places in the boats. It was a time of terror, turmoil, and hubbub. But, in the midst of it all, Hilda turned to me with infinite calm in her voice. "Where is Sebastian?" she asked, in a perfectly collected tone. "Whatever happens, we must not lose sight of him."

"I am here," another voice, equally calm, responded beside her. "You are a brave woman. Whether I sink or swim, I admire your courage, your steadfastness of purpose." It was the only time he had addressed a word to her during the entire voyage.

They put the women and children into the first boats lowered. Mothers and little ones went first: single women and widows after. "Now, Miss Wade," the first officer said, taking her gently by the shoulders when her turn arrived. "Make haste: don't keep us waiting!"

But Hilda held back. "No, no," she said, firmly. "I won't go yet. I am waiting for the men's boat: I must not leave Professor Sebastian."

The first officer shrugged his shoulders. There was no time for protest. "Next, then," he said, quickly. "Miss Martin—Miss Weatherly!"

Sebastian took her hand and tried to force her in. "You *must* go," he said, in a low, persuasive tone. "You must not wait for me!"

He hated to see her, I knew: but I imagined in his voice—for I noted it even then—there rang some undertone of genuine desire to save her.

"I AM HERE."

Hilda loosened his grasp resolutely. "No, no," she answered, "I cannot fly. I shall never leave you."

"Not even if I promise——"

She shook her head and closed her lips hard. "Certainly not," she said again, after a pause. "I cannot trust you. Besides, I must stop by your side and do my best to save you. Your life is all in all to me: I dare not risk it."

His gaze was now pure admiration. "As you will," he answered. "For he that loseth his life shall gain it."

"If ever we land alive," Hilda answered, glowing red in spite of the danger, "I shall remind you of that word: I shall call upon you to fulfil it."

The boat was lowered, and still Hilda stood by my side. One second later, another shock shook us. The *Vindhya* parted amidships, and we found ourselves struggling and choking in the cold sea water.

It was a miracle that every soul of us was not drowned that moment, as many of us were. The swirling eddy which followed as the *Vindhya* sank swamped two of the boats, and carried down not a few of those who were standing on the deck with us. The last I saw of the first officer was a writhing form whirled about in the water; before he sank, he shouted aloud, with a seaman's frank courage, "Say it was all my fault: I accept the responsibility. I ran her too close. I am the only one to blame for it." Then he disappeared in the whirlpool caused by the sinking ship, and we were left still struggling.

One of the life-rafts, hastily rigged by the sailors, floated our way. Hilda struck out a stroke or two and caught it. She dragged herself on to it, and beckoned me to follow. I could see she was grasping something tightly in her hand. I struck out in turn and reached the raft, which was composed of two seats, fastened together in haste at the first note of danger. I hauled myself up by Hilda's side. "Help me to pull him aboard!" she cried, in an agonized voice. "I am afraid he has lost consciousness!" Then I looked at the object she was clutching in her hands. It was Sebastian's white head, apparently quite lifeless.

I pulled him up with her and laid him out on the raft. A very faint breeze from the south-west had sprung up: that and a strong seaward current that sets round the rocks were carrying us straight out from the Breton coast and all chance of rescue, towards the open Channel.

But Hilda thought nothing of such physical danger. "We have saved him, Hubert!" she cried, clasping her hands. "We have saved him! But do you think he is alive? For unless he is, *my* chance, *our* chance, is gone for ever!"

I bent over and felt his pulse. As far as I could make out, it still beat feebly.

Precipice-Riding in the Continental Armies.

By B. Waters.

THE Germans are not a nation of riders like the Spaniards, who may almost be compared to Centaurs or the English, who take to the saddle almost as naturally as a duck does to water. But there is a great appreciation of good riding in German sporting and military circles; and though the majority of German riders never attain to anything approaching excellence, the few who do are so successful that they more than atone for the shortcomings of the rest. At least, they do so as far as the reputation of the cavalry at a review is concerned, though in actual warfare, under modern conditions, rare and showy exploits do not really avail much.

I do not believe the proverb that genius is merely a question of infinite pains, but, if I did, I should acclaim the typical German as a genius. This is particularly exemplified in his study of riding: he either neglects it entirely, knowing that he is not fitted to excel in it, or else he pursues it until he attains to a perfection rarely met with outside a circus.

If we go into Tattersall's at Berlin almost any winter afternoon—particularly if a hard frost has rendered the roads useless—we shall find quite a number of officers riding round and round the school, practising and exhibiting their latest tricks to the admiration of their friends of the fair sex. They can do most of the so-called *haute école* evolutions, making their horses paw the air at the word of command, or proceed on three legs, or even two. The intelligent beasts are also made to waltz, pirouette, or stop abruptly in the midst of a headlong gallop. As a performance it would not be thought much of in the presence of an Arab "fantasia," but in the kingdom of the blind the one-eyed man is king, and a German officer who obtains celebrity as a trick-rider is made almost as much fuss of as a successful cricketer at a public school.

Major Heyden Linden is probably the best-known rider in Germany. He was stationed for a long time at Hanover with his regiment of Lancers, and he afforded the principal attraction to the spectators in the military riding-school. His latest feat constituted the chief topic of the local tea-parties and *kneipen* for many a year, and his photograph was exhibited in the shop-windows in all sorts of surprising attitudes: such as crouching like a cowboy round the girths of a horse, which was rearing perpendicularly; or hanging almost miraculously from one stirrup as he reached out to pick up a handkerchief whilst at full gallop.

Another very famous rider was Graf zu Dohmer; but one day, in attempting an unusually daring piece of trick-riding, he was pitched off on to his head and cracked his skull, with the result that he has been "queer" ever since. Eight years ago he was the smartest officer in the smartest regiment.

These were, however, single and exceptional cases. To find trick-riding carried out upon a large scale as part of the drill we must go to King William I.'s Hussar regiment, which is quartered at Bonn. Their colonel, Oberst von Winterfeld, is now one of the foremost riders in the whole army, and he has devoted his best energies to developing the equestrian skill of his officers and men. His success is no doubt mainly due to the fact that he never asks them to do anything which he is not prepared to do far more recklessly himself. Among his special apparatus, for instance, is a wall 15ft. high, which he has, on horseback, jumped down from several times.

The chief general exercises, which are depicted in my illustrations, however, take place outside the town in what is known as "the Sand." A sharp, headlong declivity of loose earth runs down from a field to an open common for a distance of 70ft. or 80ft., and the soldiers are taken down it *at a gallop!* This is, of course, as severe a test for the horses as for the men, and both require a great deal of practice before they can negotiate the precipice gracefully and securely. In the first illustration the horse at the top is unmistakably refusing, and his rider will be hard put to it to entice him over the brink in spite of the excellent lead which the others have given him. And then, in the event of a sudden start, it looks as if the man would very soon be pitched over his head. The two riders in front of him are evidently old hands, for they are sitting well back and holding themselves with easy confidence. They seem to know that their horses may be trusted for this work, and so carry themselves with a leisurely air, which can only be begotten of long experience. The attitude of the horse who is buck-jumping immediately in their path might, however,

From a Photo. by] 1.—PRECIPICE-RIDING IN THE GERMAN ARMY—REFUSING AT THE BRINK. *[Theo Schafgans, Bonn.*

well excuse a certain amount of anxiety, for his attempt to steady himself at the steepest part of the descent threatens not only to send his master flying, but also to oppose a dangerous obstacle to those who follow immediately behind him. It will certainly be a case of touch and go whether a few seconds more will not see three or four horses and riders rolling down in one confused and inextricable mass. The occupants of the Royal carriage in the foreground and the riders and other spectators farther on are watching the issue with breathless excitement.

In the next photograph we see that the first horse and man have come badly to grief,

From a Photo. by] 2.—A BAD SPILL. *[Theo Schafgans, Bonn.*

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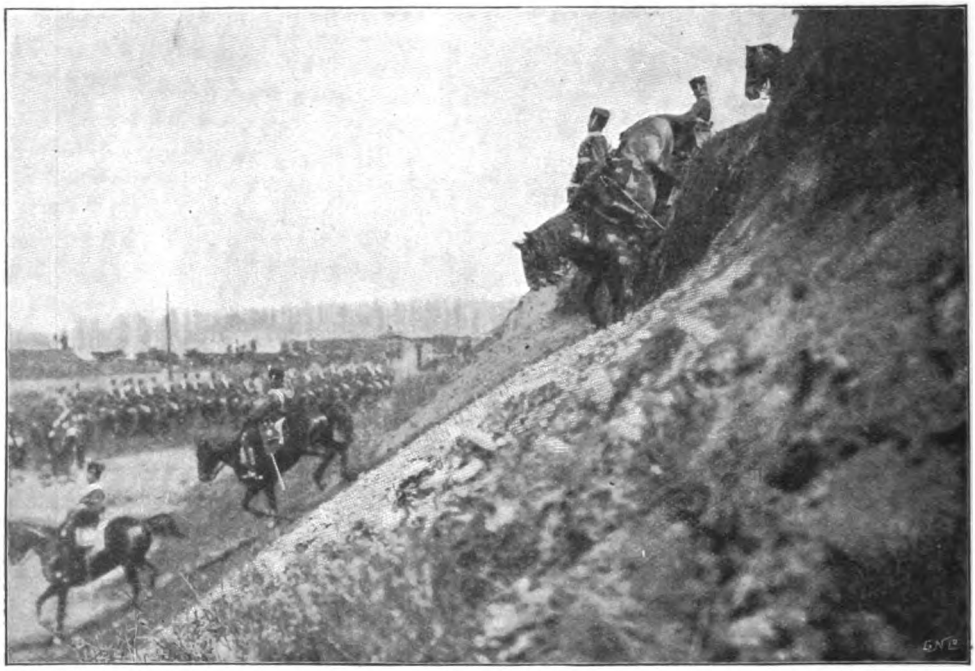


From a Photo. by] 3.—NECK TO NECK. *[Theo Schafgans, Bonn.*

and the others are judiciously allowing a decent interval between each plunge over the brink. As might be expected, accidents are by no means rare at these exercises; but as a rule they are not serious ones, for a special Providence seems to watch over all those who expose themselves to extraordinary risks. After all, the danger is only in learning, and, unless a man is unduly rash, he can soon train himself and his horse to go down far steeper places even than this in comparative security. The usual plan is to begin by leading a horse down the precipice several times, and then giving him his head the first time he is ridden down. Indeed, the most expert officers say that, provided a man will sit far enough back and give his horse his head, he is as safe as on the level. The next photograph is taken from lower down, and shows us some of the best performers who are most at their ease. Two horses are starting almost neck to neck, and the riders are leaning back at so exact an angle that the farther one can only be made out by very careful inspection. This method of leaning back is by no means so easy as it looks, and requires an immense amount of practice before it can be performed with the airy carelessness of Herr Scheibel,

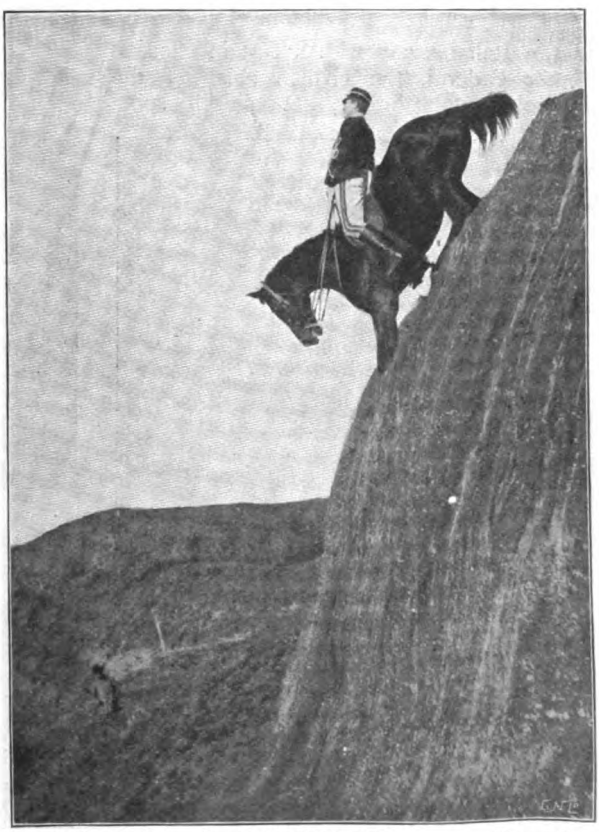
4.—THE AIRY CARELESSNESS OF HERR SCHEIBEL.
From a Photo. by Theo Schafgans, Bonn.

5.—PRECIPICE-RIDING IN THE ITALIAN ARMY—AN EASY DESCENT.
From a Photo. lent by Goerz & Co.

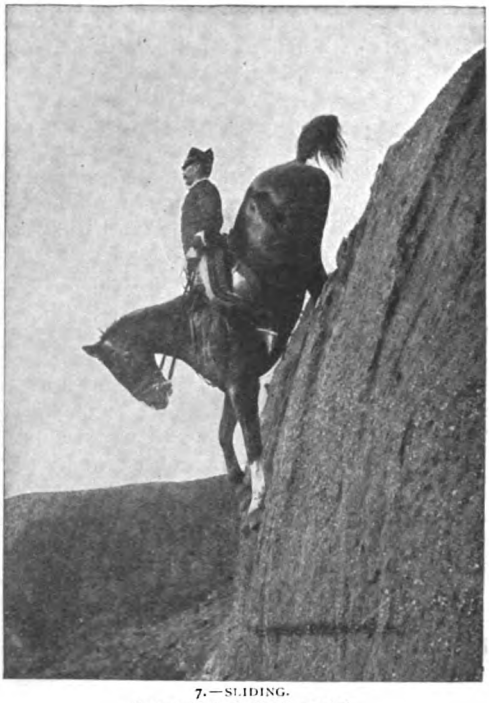
an officer of the reserve, who seems to lie down on his horse's back and shows off to the extent of keeping his right hand behind him throughout the critical descent. He seems almost to form with his horse one supernatural being, to whom no obstacle is alarming, or no ascent or descent impossible. We expect almost to see him crawl up the side of a house or disappear into the air like a witch on a broomstick!

After all, given a certain knack of sticking on, which most circus-riders find no difficulty in acquiring, the chief credit of such a performance belongs to the horse. In roadless and precipitous countries horses acquire a sureness of foot and recklessness of obstacles which would scarcely be credited in humdrum, civilized lands. Having become inured for generations to every sort of difficulty, they become second only to goats and chamois in their agility. I have often driven in Bulgaria and the neighbourhood of Constantinople in a large carriage drawn by a pair of horses, which proceeded at a brisk trot, and often broke into a headlong gallop right across country, through hedges and fields; through torrent-beds full of great boulders; up hill and down dale; and along the sides of crumbling chasms, without ever a qualm on the part of the driver. At first I imagined I was rushing to certain destruction, and all the time I was exposed to exceeding discomfort; but I soon learned that there was nothing to fear, as the horses had been accustomed to such mad performances from their earliest infancy, and their fathers before them. But I should not like to attempt such an exercise with European horses who had never been confronted by anything rougher than a hard high-road, and I am, accordingly, quite ready to do justice to the courage and skill of the German officers who have induced their horses to attempt such feats as those which it has been my privilege to describe.

Similar exercises have also been attempted

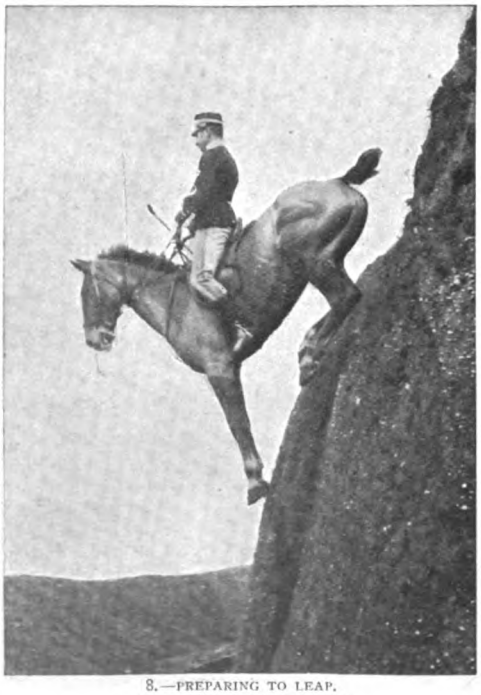


From a Photo. lent by] 6.—BEGINNING TO SLIDE. [*Goerz & Co.*



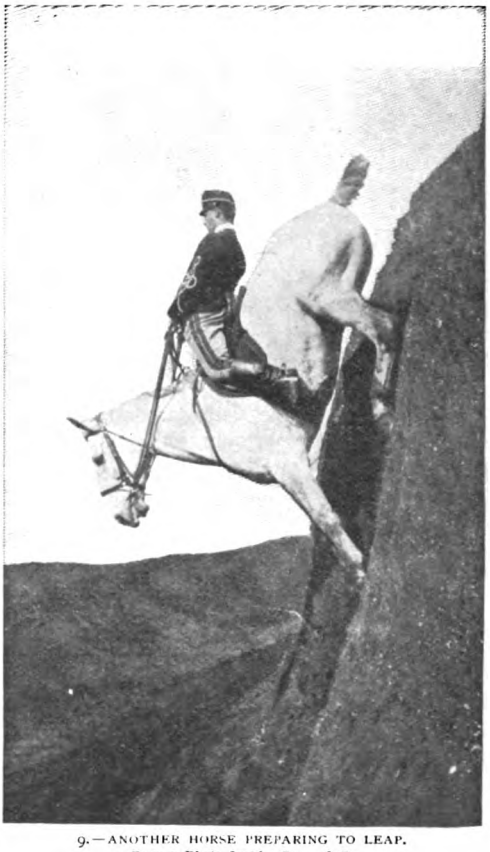
7.—SLIDING.
From a Photo. lent by Goerz & Co.

in the Italian army with a certain success. Signor Paderni, the civilian chief of the Pinerolo establishment, set himself some



8.—PREPARING TO LEAP.
From a Photo. lent by Goerz & Co.

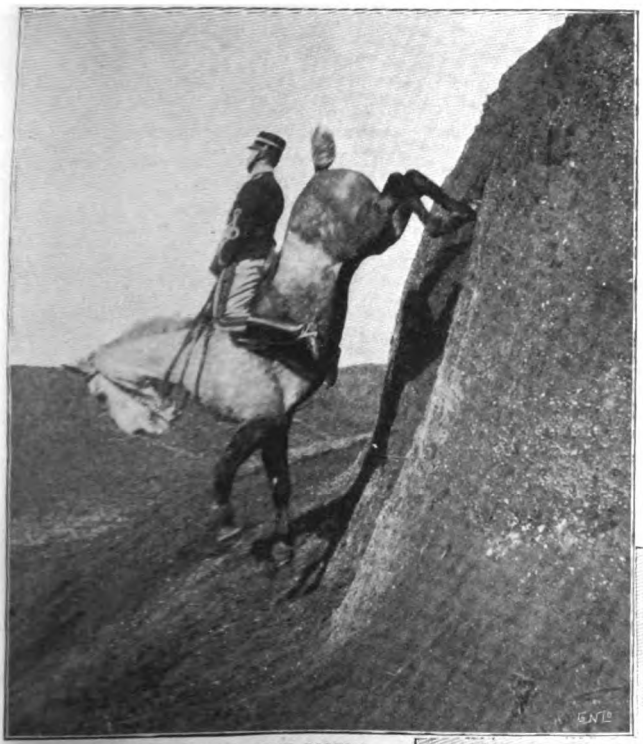
twelve years ago to ride up and down a sugar-loaf hill; and a less experienced horseman lost his life in trying to imitate this exploit. This fatality caused all such exercises to be forbidden for a time, but they have since been resumed, and there is great emulation among the Italian cavalry to excel in circus tricks at the present moment. There is a disused gravel-pit at Tor di Quinto, in the Campagna, near Rome, with a declivity of some 40ft., and here all sorts of daring experiments are practised. You can judge for yourself how daring these feats are by



9.—ANOTHER HORSE PREPARING TO LEAP.
From a Photo. lent by Goerz & Co.

glancing at the extremely impressive photographs that illustrate the rest of my article.

The horses have to be accustomed to their work gradually. In our next photograph we see them ridden down a very easy descent. In process of time they come to perform extraordinary feats—feats so remarkable that nothing short of the testimony of one's own eyes or a photograph would make one believe it. Sometimes they slide down the greater part of the way, but when they realize that



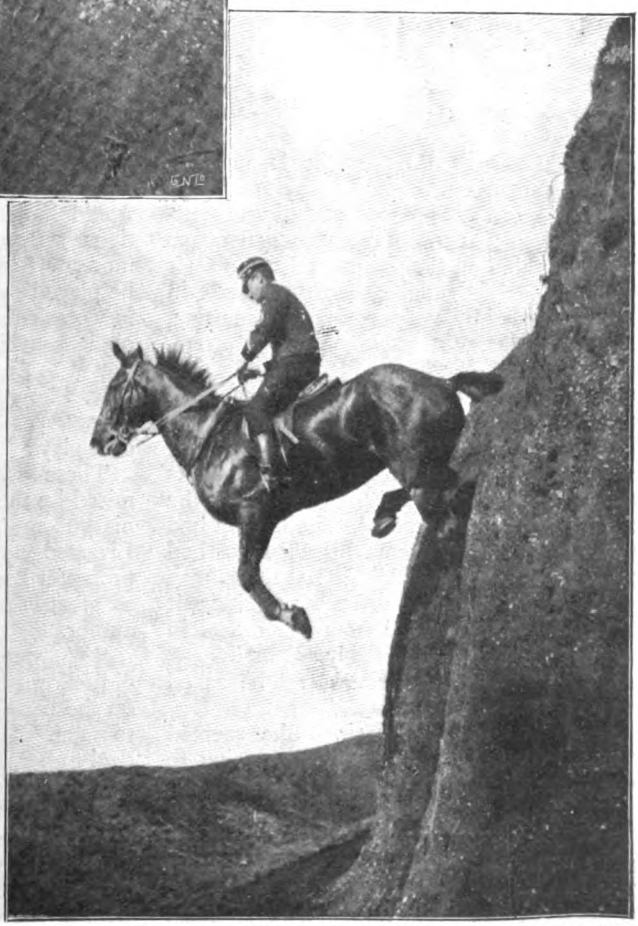
10.—LEAPING NEAR THE BOTTOM.
From a Photo. lent by Goerz & Co.

they can slide no farther, they become alarmed and take prodigious leaps as they approach the bottom of the slope. Sometimes the leap comes much earlier, and the crash at the bottom is something terrific. Accidents are, however, very few and far between. The horses "fall soft."

This work requires a great deal of nerve, but is of no particular use for practical purposes. Otherwise it would certainly have been imported into our own cavalry, seeing that English riders are unrivalled by any others in the world.

A word may be pardoned with reference to my illustrations. Time was when an exposure of the one-hundredth of a second was considered wonderful, but such exposures would have been useless for such rapid work as this, which has been done with the Goerz-Auschütz slit-shutter in the thousandth part of a second. For pictures of subjects like the flight of a bullet, the splash of a drop of water, the movements of ripples in a fluid, even the thousandth part of a second is too fast; but with the aid of a magnesium flash, and, better still, of an electric spark, infinitesimal moments of time can be utilized. Indeed, in some cases it has been found that the duration of the light of an electric spark is as short as one twenty-five thousandth part of a second of time.

So we may compliment the photographer who took these most curious and striking snap-shots.



From a Photo. lent by] 11.—LEAPING FROM A HEIGHT. *[Goerz & Co.*

By J. Harwood Panting.

"AUTHOR—author!—author!" The shouts of the audience grew more and more vehement. The principal actors in the drama had taken their "call." At length the curtain was drawn slightly aside at the prompt wing, and Paul Hesseltine stood, pale and trembling, before the audience. He was as a man summoned to his execution rather than one summoned before an excited and enthusiastic throng to receive their tribute to his genius. He had spent many anxious days and nights wondering how "A Fatal Silence" would be received. From the moment the curtain had been raised on the drama his suspense had increased a hundredfold. At last the climax had been reached, and he knew that it spelt "success." He escaped from the ordeal in front of the curtain as quickly as possible.

"Where is Miss Liversedge?" he asked the prompter.

"Gone to her room, sir. She seemed precious tired. I thought she was going to faint when she came off the last time at the wings. She's worked hard, sir."

"Very."

No one knew better than Paul how hard Ivy Liversedge had worked to make his drama a success. She had first of all been cast for a minor part. The lady who had been engaged to play the heroine had taken umbrage at a suggestion made by Paul and had thrown up her engagement. After this disaster one might have thought that Paul would have been chary of making suggestions. But he had the temerity to make one more. He suggested that the heroine should be played by Ivy. This hint nearly resulted in worse consequences than the other. The objection this time was raised by the manager.

"Miss Liversedge had never played leading lady. She was not capable of playing leading lady. Was Paul fool enough to wreck his own play?"

These were a few of the objections raised by the manager. But Paul stuck to his guns. The vacancy was filled by Ivy Liversedge. She had worked hard, as the prompter had said, and the result had been as great a triumph for the actress as for the author.

"We were quite justified in *our* selection, old fellow," said the manager, clapping Paul on the back. "Miss Liversedge has scored to-night. I always thought there was a good deal in her, and it's come out to-night. I'm glad I gave her the part. She won't look back after to-night. Nor you, old fellow. Your fortune's made."

In the green-room Paul was the recipient of further congratulations from actors and critics. He answered mechanically. His glance kept wandering to the door.

Presently it opened, and a strange figure came into the green-room. It was not the

figure Paul was anxiously awaiting, but that of an elderly man, with a straggling grey beard, a much-wrinkled, almost sullen, type of face. The pockets of his overcoat were bulged with manuscripts. He looked round the room as he entered. His glance rested for a moment on Paul. Not finding the face he was seeking, he shrank back into a corner of the room.

"HE SHRANK BACK INTO A CORNER OF THE ROOM."

A little later the door again opened, and Ivy Liversedge entered. She was slightly above the average height. She was not beautiful, but possessed that personal magnetism which attracts and interests more than mere beauty. All eyes were turned to her as she entered the green-room, precisely as the gaze of the audience had turned to her and followed her every movement when she was on the stage.

Paul hastened to her with outstretched hand. She had escaped him before. She could not escape him now.

"I owe my triumph to you, Miss Liversedge," he said, looking the gratitude he could not express.

"And mine is due to you, Mr. Hesseltine. Had you not written the drama there would have been no part for me to triumph in, as you are good enough to put it. So—— Father!"

The queer figure had come from the corner into which he had withdrawn, and touched her upon the arm. The sad, wrinkled face had lighted up the instant she entered the room. It transfigured the old man and made of him a different being. He was trembling in every limb, as Paul had trembled when he had stood before the curtain.

"You have triumphed, darling! You have triumphed! You have leapt to the top of the ladder at a bound."

"All through Mr. Hesseltine, father. Let me introduce you."

The face of Silas Liversedge underwent another transformation. The light died out of it, as suddenly as it had come. He took no notice of the hand which Paul extended to him as Ivy introduced them. He bowed stiffly, and turned almost rudely from Paul as he said:

"Come, Ivy, it's getting late. We must hurry home. You want rest—rest. You're pale and jaded. I watched you from the pit. My eyes never left you. I sometimes feared the strain would be too much for you. Thank God, it's over, and you've won—won! Come, darling!"

She smiled tenderly as the old man linked his arm in hers, flashed a good-night to those in the room, and went out. Paul had seen the old man hovering about the stage-door on two or three occasions. He had been told that he was the father of Miss Liversedge, but the old man had always avoided him, and that was the first time he had been introduced to him.

"What a contrast between father and daughter," said Paul, as the door closed on the pair.

"Confounded old curmudgeon!" said the manager. "If I had my way, he should not come inside the theatre."

"He seems fond of the girl."

"Fonder of her earnings, I expect."

"Doesn't he do anything himself?"

"What an innocent you are, Hesseltine!" laughed the manager. "Aren't you aware that old Liversedge is one of your most formidable rivals? He has bombarded every manager in London and the provinces with his manuscripts. Didn't you notice them overflowing from his pockets?"

"Unacted?"

"Unacted, of course."

"Poor old man!" Paul spoke with deep pity. In the hour of his triumph he could afford to be generous. He could now understand the reason of the sadness and disappointment written on the old man's face.

"Spare your pity for the poor devils who have had to wade through such trash," said the manager.

Every night the old man came for his daughter after that, but whenever Paul happened to be at the theatre he avoided him with the same care that he had done before the night Ivy had introduced them. Paul was puzzled and annoyed. What could be the meaning of it? Was Liversedge jealous of his success? Surely that was scarcely possible, seeing that Paul's drama had served as the medium of Ivy's triumph.

The play was now in the full tide of its successful career. Paul's steps irresistibly turned of an evening to the stage-door. It was not to see the play. He had had more than enough of that. It was another and more potent power that attracted him.

One night when he arrived at the theatre at the fall of the curtain he found to his joy that Ivy's grim guardian was absent from his post. So when she came from her dressing-room he asked permission to accompany her home. She consented. As the flat in which she lived was not more than a mile distant from the theatre, and the night a clear one, they decided to walk.

"It is very kind of you, Mr. Hesseltine," she said, "to take father's place. He has not been altogether well for the last day or two, and I insisted that he should not come for me to-night."

"I regret your father's illness, Miss Liversedge; and yet I'm thankful that his absence has given me the opportunity I have long desired of a few minutes' private conversation with you. Will you tell me in what way I have offended your father? I can trust you to tell me frankly, I know. Do not be afraid of hurting my feelings; for if there is a grievance of any kind I would like to remove it."

"HE ASKED PERMISSION TO ACCOMPANY HER HOME."

"He is an old man," she said, with a tremor in her voice; "and—and—we can excuse a good deal in an old man, can we not?" And then, without waiting for an answer, she added, in a still lower key: "Next to God, Silas Liversedge has been my greatest friend. Heaven only knows what would have become of me had it not been for him."

"Has he done more than most fathers would have done? Surely it is rather a privilege than a duty where so accomplished a daughter—I do not say it in flattery—is concerned?"

"He has done more than most fathers would have done, though he is not my father."

"Not your father?" Paul repeated, in astonishment.

"No; I am letting you into a secret which the world does not know, because I'm sure that you will not reveal it, Mr. Hesseltine. Silas Liversedge is not my father. My real name is Summersby—Ivy Summersby. I cannot recollect my own parents. My mother

died soon after my birth; and I had scarcely reached my third year when my father caught typhoid fever and died. Silas Liversedge was a neighbour of ours. He had undergone some great trouble of his own—I have never known what it was, because he always avoided telling me, and I shrank from questioning him, seeing that the memory of it gave him pain. Earlier in life he had been married; for when I was a schoolgirl, I stole in upon him one day when he was looking at a portrait—the portrait of a young and beautiful lady. He hastily put it away when he saw that I was looking at it over his shoulder. Out of girlish curiosity, I asked him who the pretty lady was. 'My wife, child,' he answered. 'She is now dead—dead—dead. If you love me, never speak of her to me again!' I shall never forget the pain and misery in his face as he turned to me; nor the sadness and despair in his voice as he repeated the words, 'Dead—dead—dead.' Ever since then I have respected his wish. I have never once questioned him about the past—about the wife who is lying in her grave."

"And her portrait—have you never seen that since?"

"Once, and once only. I have reason to recollect the occasion, for it was on the morning after your play, 'A Fatal Silence,' had achieved success. I rose earlier than usual, anxious, I suppose, to know what the morning papers would say of the play. To my astonishment, I heard Silas pacing up and down the room which he calls his 'den.' Upon entering it, the first thing that caught my glance was the portrait of Silas's dead wife. It was upon the mantelpiece, and as he strode up the room I could see that his gaze was fixed upon it. He was so absorbed that I was able to withdraw quickly unobserved, afraid of harshly striking once again upon a tender chord."

Paul's heart went out to the woman beside him. He had come in contact with many of her sex, but he had met with few so tenderly thoughtful and considerate.

"Now you know more than the world knows of the link between Silas Liversedge and me," she continued. "But there is one thing you cannot realize. You cannot realize all he has been to me. In spite of his own early trouble, and the bitter disappointments that have followed him in his course as dramatist, he has watched over me with the love and patience not only of the best of fathers, but of mothers. He has stood to me in the place of both. You now understand him better, do you not? If he has seemed uncouth, harsh to you, you can see that there is a good, kind, honest heart beneath. God bless Silas Liversedge."

"God bless him, too," echoed Paul, devoutly. "I understand all that he has been and is to you, Miss Liversedge; but it scarcely explains his attitude to me. It is not merely the crabbedness of old age, or the gall of an early sorrow. It seems to me prompted by one thing only — dislike — positive dislike. Heaven knows what I have done to incur it."

He tried to see her face; but it was averted from his. He could feel, however, that the hand resting on his arm was trembling. She did not at once answer. She seemed afraid to trust herself to speech. When she at length spoke, she had gained control of her voice; but it had that note of pathos in it which had so often thrilled her audience, and had held in its magic the man who was walking by her side.

"I will be frank with you, Mr. Hesseltine, though the pain to me in speaking will be greater than that to you in listening. My father *does* dislike you—there is no use in denying it. For what reason, I am as ignorant as yourself. We cannot help our prejudices. Forgive him! As I said before, he is an old man, and his life has been one of bitter disappointment."

They walked on in silence for a short distance.

"I have given you pain, Mr. Hesseltine?" she presently said, breaking the silence.

"You have only confirmed my impression. Nevertheless, it has given me pain, for I had a great desire to gain your father's esteem and friendship."

Her hand tightened on his arm. He knew as plainly as though she had told him that that was her desire also.

"You have said that your father has had a life of disappointment, Miss Liversedge. Rumour has already told me something to the same effect, and something also of the cause of his disappointment. Do you think I could be of any help to him with those manuscripts of his?"

"Would you really?" Her face brightened up. The note of sorrow in the voice had changed to one of joy. "Oh, that is kind of you, Mr. Hesseltine. It might make all the difference. Do you know I have often detested myself since that night I gained a measure of success? I think of the older actresses who have striven for years, and have never tasted it. After all, it must be bitter

to them to see the younger ones carry off laurels they have hungered for—mustn't it?"

Paul understood. That was her delicate way of putting what he himself suspected. She had come to the same conclusion that he had—that the dislike of Mr. Liversedge to him was attributable to an old man's jealousy.

Before going to bed that night he wrote a letter to Mr. Liversedge, asking him if he would do him the honour of reading to him one of his plays. He determined, if possible, to remove any grievance the old man might have against him, and he thought he saw a way by which he could carry out his intention.

To his delight he received an answer next day, saying that Mr. Liversedge would be pleased to see him if he could make it convenient to call that afternoon. Paul at once hastened to the flat. Ivy was out, but Mr. Liversedge was awaiting him in a condition of nervous agitation. His illness had ploughed deeper lines in his sunken cheeks, but the eyes were lit up with excitement as he greeted Paul effusively.

"I—I am so glad you wrote to me, Mr. Hesseltine. It is really very kind of you. Come this way into my little snuggery, where we sha'n't be interrupted."

He led the way from the sitting-room into a small study and workroom.

"This is my room—all arranged for me by Ivy. I'd better turn the key. Our domestic has a way of popping in her head just when she isn't wanted."

He turned the key of the door as he spoke, much to the amusement of Paul.

"Take a seat, Mr. Hesseltine—take a seat. It is really very kind of you; but—but—I should be sorry to trespass on your good nature by reading to you one of my prosy plays."

"I trust you have not the intention of disappointing me, Mr. Liversedge. I have come to you for the express purpose of listening to you. The idea has occurred to me that we might possibly do something together."

"Collaborate?" cried the old man, eagerly.

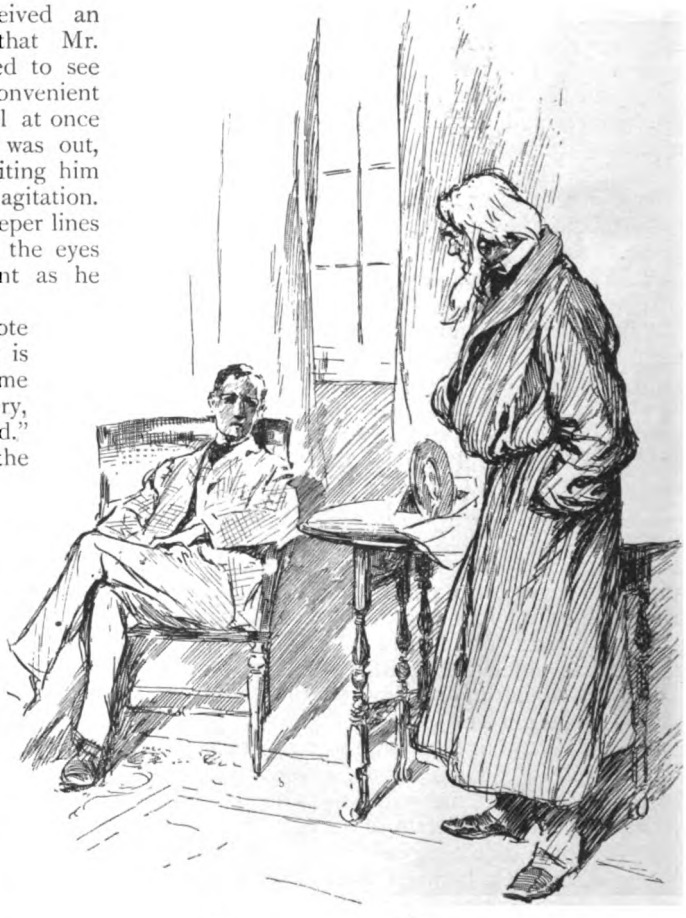
"Why not? You have the experience which I lack."

"Strange!" cried Mr. Liversedge. "The very thing I had thought of, though I scarcely liked to say so. I've got a grand play in my mind. It's been simmering there for years, but I've never put it to paper. If we could only work it out between us——"

He stopped short, waiting for Paul to answer.

"I shall be delighted. Can you give me some idea of what your play is to be?"

"Certainly. I'm anxious for your opinion.



"I'M ANXIOUS FOR YOUR OPINION."

I can only, of course, give you a rough outline."

"Of course."

Paul leant back in the arm-chair and composed himself to listen. Liversedge

took one or two quick turns up and down the room, then commenced in tones that vibrated through the room.

"The drama commences in the happy home of—let me see, what name shall I use? Oh, my own will serve. It will give a touch of realism to the play. The drama, then, commences in the happy home of Silas Liversedge. He has a wife whom he adores, but no children. Enter the villain—we will call him, for the time being, Percival Carruthers. Carruthers gains the confidence of Liversedge. All the time he is plotting against the domestic happiness of his friend. Bit by bit he weans away the affection of wife from husband. The two elope. The elopement brings down the curtain on the first act. Do you follow me, Mr. Hesseltine?"

"Perfectly. Your plot is perfectly clear. No very serious complications so far." But Paul added to himself: "Poor old fellow! The idea that has been simmering in his mind so long, and which he considers so original, is one of the unfortunate commonplaces of existence." Then aloud: "Pray, proceed, Mr. Liversedge. I'm getting quite interested."

"I'm glad of that. We will now ring up the curtain on act two. Liversedge is struck down with brain fever upon discovering his wife's deceit, his friend's treachery. His health, like his domestic happiness, is shattered. Near him lives a rough, uncultured labourer—Edward Summersby."

"Summersby!" Paul repeated to himself. "I have heard that name before." And then, almost as the thought flashed through his brain, he remembered that that was the real name of Ivy. Was the man's reason giving way? Was he confusing fact with fiction? Liversedge was striding up and down the room again as one possessed, heart and soul, with the drama he was sketching.

"Summersby," he presently continued, "has been left a widower with one child—a girl that can just toddle. What shall we christen her? We may as well keep it in the family. Let's give her the name of my girl—Ivy. It will do just as well as any other. Well, the man with the rough exterior and big heart——"

"Edward Summersby," prompted Paul.

"Edward Summersby—thank you, Mr. Hesseltine—nurses Liversedge back to consciousness and health. Upon his recovery he starts out determined to revenge himself on the man who has wronged him."

"*More* commonplace!" groaned Paul, inwardly, but nevertheless greatly interested in the "drama."

"Liversedge, as a result of his quest," went on the old man, "discovers that his wife and Carruthers have gone to Australia. He is about to follow them, when he hears of the death of the man who has nursed him back to life."

"Edward Summersby," again prompted Paul, beginning to get more and more interested in the story, as he saw how it assimilated itself to the few details Ivy had already given him of the old man's life.

"Edward Summersby! What a splendid memory you have for names, Mr. Hesseltine. Well, the better emotions have not been altogether destroyed in Liversedge's nature. He returns to his home, and becomes a father to little Ivy. Am I still clear to you, Mr. Hesseltine?"

"Quite," answered Paul, nestling deeper and deeper in his chair, as his thoughts went to that other Ivy whom he had come to admire and love.

"The return of Liversedge to his home, and his becoming a second father to little Ivy, will bring down the curtain on the second act. If any improvements occur to you, Mr. Hesseltine, I hope you will suggest them as I go on," said Liversedge, pausing.

"It will be much better for me to reserve any criticisms I have to make till the end, I think. So much turns upon the climax," said Paul.

"True—true!" cried Liversedge, quite hoarse with the emotions called forth by his "drama." "So much depends on the climax. But you need have no fear on that point. I've thought it all out. The climax will be a strong one, I promise. Let's see—where am I? Oh, we have finished two acts. We now come to the third. Liversedge throws on one side any thought of present revenge in his desire to repay the debt he owes to the child's dead father. His life becomes absorbed in the life of little Ivy. He clothes her, educates her. Then, finding she has a natural gift for the stage, nurses and develops her talent to the best of his ability. He does more. He spends the solitary hours of the night in writing plays for her in which he hopes to see her ultimately shine as heroine."

"Ha!" Paul rose quickly from his recumbent position in the chair, and gazed at the strangely excited old man. The drama had now become just as absorbing to him as to Liversedge. Already he was actively engaged in clothing its dry bones with flesh.

"You like my drama?" asked Liversedge.

"Go on—go on."

"Ivy grows to womanhood, her talent unrecognised. A worse fate befalls the efforts of the father who has adopted her. No manager will read his plays. They remain unacted. Things are at this pass when a new dramatist comes along—a young man. At a bound he leaps into popular favour. His drama becomes the talk of the town, while the dramas of Liversedge remain in his desk."

He paused, and again strode feverishly up and down the room. Then he once more confronted Paul, the muscles of his face working spasmodically, the pupils of his eyes dilated, like one distraught.

"The young dramatist who had achieved that brilliant success," he went on, in deep, passionate tones, "was a nephew of the man who had years ago run away with Liversedge's wife."

"Nephew of the man who had run away with Liversedge's wife!" repeated Paul, staring at the man before him in bewilderment.

"The actress who played the heroine of the drama, and had been chiefly instrumental in its success, was the daughter Liversedge had adopted—Ivy. But I have yet to tell you the cruellest stroke of all that Fate had reserved for Liversedge. He had so long watched over the girl he had adopted that he had come to know her better than she knew herself. What was his misery—his torture of mind—when he discovered bit by bit that she loved, disguise it though she might, even from herself, the dramatist—the nephew of the man who had robbed him of his wife! But let us have all the characters clear for the curtain," cried Liversedge. "I am the unfortunate husband, the unfortunate dramatist, and unfortunate father; Ivy is the daughter of Edward Summersby — the child whom I adopted; Carruthers, the villain of the piece, is the uncle of Paul Hesseltine, who now stands before me, and—may Heaven have mercy on his soul!—I know of only one climax to my drama, and it's this."

To Paul's horror, Liversedge drew a revolver from his pocket as he spoke and presented it straight at him. Paul did not move. He stood gazing fixedly along the flashing barrel of the pistol into the wild eyes before him. At that moment there was a knocking at the door.

"Father!"

It was Ivy. The sound of her voice seemed to paralyze the old man's hand. Twice he tried to pull the trigger; then the weapon dropped from his nerveless hand to the floor.

"Father—father!" cried Ivy, in tones of alarm. "Why have you locked the door? Open it, please."

The key was in the lock. With a stride Paul reached the door and unlocked it. Ivy stood in the doorway, amazement on her face.

"Mr. Hesseltine!" Then her glance travelled from him to Liversedge. "Father!"

"LIVERSEDGE DREW A REVOLVER FROM HIS POCKET AND PRESENTED IT."

Liversedge had sunk into a chair, and covered his face with his hands. Sobs rent his breast. Tears, such as only men weep, were streaming through the long, gaunt fingers.

Ivy knelt by his side, and gently drew the grey head to her breast.

"LIVERSEDGE HAD SUNK INTO A CHAIR."

"Father!" Her glance went in horror to the pistol that had fallen from his hand, and then stole upward in appeal to Paul. "What—what does it all mean, Mr. Hesseltine?"

Paul had had time to collect his thoughts. He now recalled the rumours he had heard when a boy of a scapegrace uncle who had fled from England; for what reason he had never known, as the facts had been carefully kept from him by his parents. Later he had heard of his death, and all interest in him had expired with him. To his pain and shame he now for the first time discovered in this strange way the precise nature of his uncle's crime. But at the back of all was another, and more precious, secret, that had fallen from the old man's lips—the revelation that Ivy loved him.

His love for her was returned. With the knowledge of that fact he could afford to be magnanimous. Whatever resentment he might have felt towards the poor old, broken-down man before him died almost at the moment of its birth, and deep pity took its place. He had been more sinned against than sinning. His mind had been temporarily unhinged by the suffering and misfortune through which he had passed.

"What does it all mean, Miss Liversedge—Ivy?" said Paul, addressing her for the first time by her Christian name. "There is nothing at all to be alarmed at—indeed, there isn't. Your father has been going through one of his dramas—that's all, and the realism has been too much for him. Let us make a good old dramatic picture." He knelt as he spoke by the side of the old man, opposite to Ivy. "I told you, Mr. Liversedge," he went on, in an earnest voice, "that I would reserve my criticisms of your drama till the end. My only criticism is this—it is a powerful, stirring play, which has affected me more than I care to tell you; but, pardon me for saying it, you have altogether missed the right climax. You have been mixing tragedy with drama. Let me suggest what I think will be an infinitely better ending. Ivy has been to you as a daughter. Let the nephew of the man who has wronged you be to you as a son. That will give you a finer stage picture—and dramatic justice will be satisfied."

The climax suggested by Paul Hesseltine took the place of that tragic one which the distraught imagination of Liversedge had at first contemplated. The old man did not live very long after; but the few remaining years of his life were happier than they had been since his wife was stolen from him. Paul and Ivy joined hands and brought to him the sunshine that had so long faded from his life.

Bears at School.

By Albert H. Broadwell. Photographs by A. J. Johnson.

"BRUISES, did you say? Look at my arms!" We looked and wondered. Big patches of blue stood out, witnesses of Mr. Permane's encounters with his pupils. Some twelve years ago this famous trainer took a particular fancy to bears, and he confidentially asserts (and no one will doubt him) that not one of the many bears he has handled during that time has ever taken any particular fancy to him. We have had occasion to assist at a private performance, during which the accompanying photos. were taken. Mr. Permane, whose nightly performance with his bears used to form one of the principal draws at the Alhambra, Leicester Square, need have no fear of our ever starting in the bear-training line after that experience. Bears at school are very amusing to look at from a distance, but our photographer absolutely refuses to focus bears again at any price.

OUT SHOPPING.

"They catch them in Russia, and we train them in England," said Mr. Permane. "Curiously enough, every tenth house in St. Petersburg owns at least one pet bear cub during the season. The Russians are fond of pets, and the bear cubs are bought as they are brought in by the peasants. They are only kept for a short time, however. When about three months old they exhibit certain signs of familiarity which to the average man in the street seem rather uncalled for; they are then generously presented to the nation, and find a home in the bear-pits at the Zoological Gardens, where as many as sixty cubs are to be found at a time.

"Familiarity breeds contempt," says Mr. Permane, and familiarity has led him into some tight places.

Though he and the lady bear shown in the first photo. seem on very good terms, there are moments when such familiarity is undesirable.

"It was a hot summer in Madrid," said the trainer, "and the weather seemed to affect my pets rather more than usual. After feeding time I went to caress one of the bears, who was chained to an ordinary manger. Not seeming in a mood to accept my overtures, however, the brute seized me by the arm just above the shoulder, and shook me as a terrier would a rat, and then threw me in a heap into the furthermost corner of the stable. This being the second time she had attacked me in a determined manner that week, I thought it high time that the good people of Madrid were enjoying some bear's meat for supper—and so they did!"

Bear's meat for supper seems a strange dish, but curiously enough there are many people on the Continent who delight in bear-steak.

This statement seemed so extraordinary that we determined to sound Mr. Permane thoroughly on that point. We will let him tell how it is that bear-steak is offered to the public for consumption, though they little guess how the transaction comes about.

"You must understand," he said, "that after a certain age, which after all depends much upon the temperament of the animal, a bear will become unmanageable. There is no coaxing him into good behaviour, either by threats or kindness. He simply will have his own way, and then the best thing to do is to get rid of him at an early date.

THE SERPENTINE DANCE.

"The last two bears which I had to destroy under such circumstances became unmanageable whilst I was performing in Paris. It was in the middle of winter, and though I unsuccessfully tried to reform their unruly ways, I had to decide to do away with them.

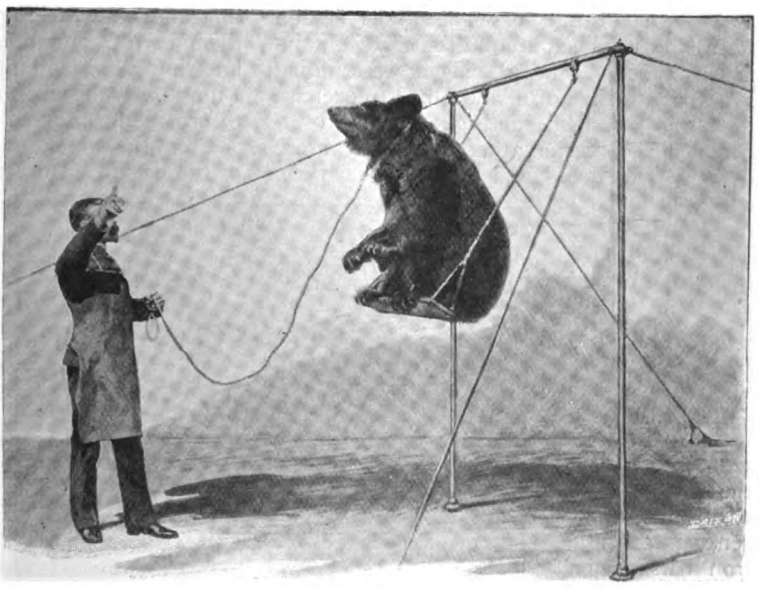
"Now, I love my bears greatly — they dance for the very love of me, as you see in the Serpentine Dance photo.; so you will understand that I never could take it into my head to shoot them myself. I have always had to secure the good offices of another to give the *coup de grâce* to my unruly ones. The two bears in question were accordingly shot and sold to a butcher in the Place de la République for £30, dead meat. The run on those bears was tremendous—the meat was sold at two francs a pound, and the skins fetched nearly £10 each! A Commissaire de Police had to be called in to stop the rush on the remains of my pets, and I felt sad indeed at the sight of such a pitiful end to their theatrical life.

"When I buy a 'guaranteed' bear from the Zoo at St. Petersburg I can bet my bottom dollar that he has never been tampered with before. These bears come straight from their native wilds, and that is how I like them best. I am always on the look-out for a bear that has never been handled before. I like him young. You can educate him like you would a child; but, mind you, you must be very firm, otherwise he will take the upper hand, and then it is all over.

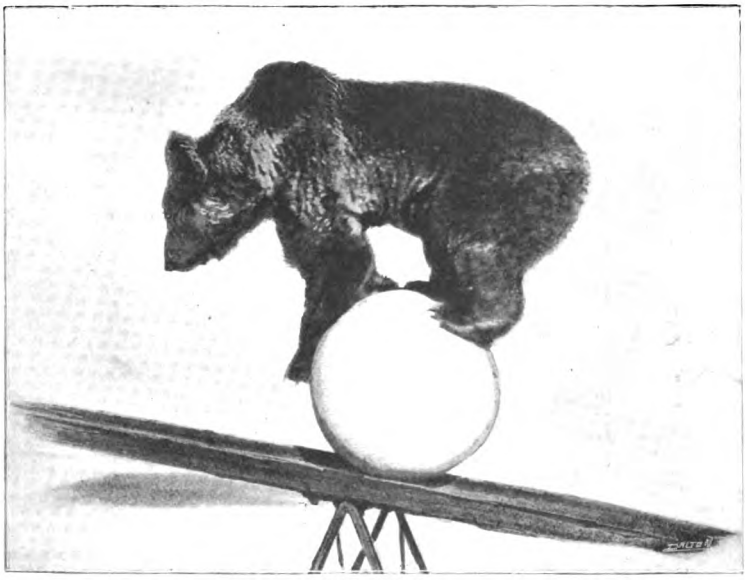
"The best time to start the bear in the training business is when he is about eighteen months old. The Swinging Feat shown here took me quite six months to teach. Curiously enough, the bear enjoys the swinging immensely now, though the first few lessons were not quite so pleasant.

"How long it takes to thoroughly train a bear is difficult to say. It depends entirely upon the bear's disposition. Some bears are slow, others are quick to understand what you want, and the rest are too quick altogether, and those I drop like hot dishes.

"The cost, you say? Well, I pay from £7 to £10 each delivered in London. But I do not think that a bear could be obtained as a pet under £15.



IN FULL SWING.



THE SEE-SAW.

"This reminds me of an amusing incident. I expected a consignment of eight bears, which arrived at a certain London terminus rather late in the evening. I was sent for rather urgently, and though I resented that somewhat unwarranted intrusion upon my evening pipe, I went, and I now think it is as well that I did so. The whole station staff had assembled around the cage containing my 'goods.' The passengers were adding materially to the crush, and I had to exercise the utmost patience and goodwill to overcome the confusion that unhappily arose over my 'wild dogs,' for, let me add, they were, curiously enough, registered as such. They had been in their cage a week, and, of course, they tried their level best to get out of it at the earliest possible moment. I inwardly thanked the Russians for their common sense in providing iron bars of great strength."

One of this unruly party is shown at work a year after his arrival on English soil. His feat consists in rolling a huge ball up one half of a see-saw, rocking freely, and down the other half. He is shown here anxiously awaiting the dreaded moment when the ascent quickly changes into an abrupt descent with a bang.

"There is one thing about which the public at large seem to be under a wrong impression, and this I should like to correct," added Mr. Permane. "Bears are herbivorous, not carnivorous. They will attack either animal or man only after a somewhat protracted fast. There is, therefore, no necessity for giving bears any meat whatsoever.

"Wherever I go," says Mr. Permane, "I am always besieged by the local butcher offering to provide me with the necessary meat and bones for my bears, and when I send him away, telling him that I only give them carrots and bread, he departs with a knowing wink, and probably imagines that I am utterly mistaken as to the food I ought to provide for my four-footed friends."

From the evident enjoyment shown by one of the pets in "Do let me have some," we

"DO LET ME HAVE SOME."

have evidence enough that carrots are considered quite a dainty.

"My large bears," Mr. Permane adds, in explanation, "will eat 4lb. of bread and 10lb. of carrots per diem, and I do not believe in limiting their green food on any account. It is a splendid thing for their coats, and I can remember my four bears eating nearly two sacks full of freshly cut grass in one day.

"Food, however, is not the only thing to be considered. Bears, as a rule, drink water; that is, of course, in their native country. But, will you believe it, my bears were once confirmed bibbers. Do you see that little bear? His name is Fatty, and that name has been given him on account of his rotundity. He used to have beer for luncheon and beer for dinner, and so did the others. I had to put a stop to that, however. He is a clever little chap, and has learnt to be a pickpocket of no mean merit. Look at the knowing way in which he steals the bottle in The Pickpocket, and the joyful look when he finds himself the sole possessor of his plunder.

THE PICKPOCKET.

"In days gone by I used to give my bears what is commonly called 'four ale' beer; one day, however, while performing at Kidgrove, I was unable to obtain any of their every-day liquid. In the hurry of the moment I accordingly had to purchase some bottled Bass. That settled the bears. Some days later I had to move to another place, and I used 'four ale' again, but, alas, the bears would not drink it—they knew what they were about. One of them, on tasting the contents of his bottle, showed his indignation by throwing it right across the stage, smashing some half-dozen footlights, and growling in a way that caused some trepidation among the audience. Upon my explaining the reason, however, I met with a tremendous ovation. This incident ended the beer business altogether. I cast about for ways and means, and decided to give my bears sugar water. They took to it in the kindest fashion, and their bibbings are now exclusively confined to temperance drinks, a course which they have adopted with much wisdom, and to the benefit of my balance at the bank."

We ventured to ask Mr. Permane how his bears happened to acquire their former vicious habit in preference to temperance drinks, especially before large audiences, when it might have been thought that they, in the ordinary course of modesty, would have chosen the ample opportunities offered by elaborate stage scenery to hide their blushes.

HIS PLUNDER.

"It was quite by accident," said the trainer. "One day one of my bears got loose in a stable, and seeing a bottle containing the remainder of some beer, he very ingeniously started to empty the contents thereof. I saw at once that there would be a good stage trick in this, and so I went ahead and taught them the use of the sugar-water bottle."

*Curiosities.**

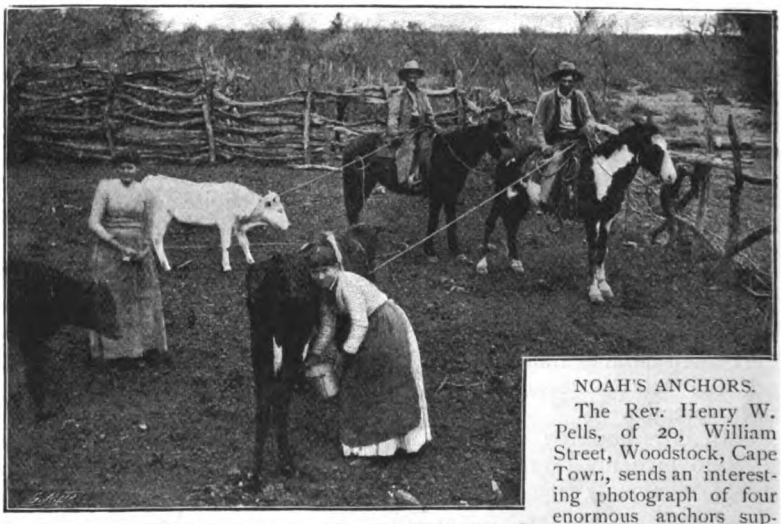
[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

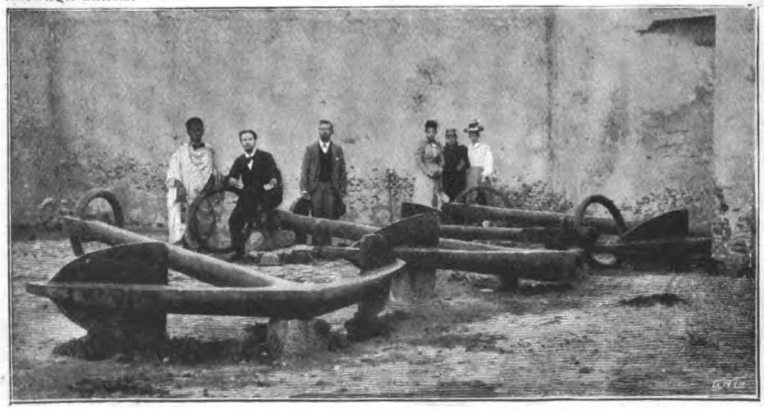
HOW WILD COWS ARE MILKED.

Mr. H. P. Hornby, editor and proprietor of the *Uvalde Leader*, Uvalde, Texas, sends an interesting photo. In explanation he says: "Here is a photo. of a milking scene in a Texas cow-pen. The cow has probably been found out in the pasture with a young calf and has been brought in to be milked, or rather 'broke.' There are some twenty more cows and calves in the pen, which covers an acre in extent. The cow in question has had her hind legs duly tied to prevent mishaps, and the man on the horse keeps the rope taut. A peculiar fact (at least to an Englishman) is that none of the calves are weaned, and that it would be impossible to milk a Texas cow without first letting the 'calf suck.' The reason, the stockmen say, is because the cows give so little milk, and then the calves get so much bigger and stronger and are easier to raise. From twenty-five cows barely more than two and a half gallons of milk can be got."

A JUMP OVER A HORSE.

A new seaside recreation suggests itself in looking at the snap-shot reproduced here showing Mr. H. L. Darlington in the act of jumping over a horse attached to an ice-cream vendor's cart. The jump was made on soft sand, which makes the feat all the more remarkable, whilst the breadth of the animal and the shafts of the cart must also be taken into consideration. Mr. Herbert Connor, of 7, St. George's Villas, Thorn Road, Doncaster, took this clever snap-shot at the critical moment, and the scene was laid on Scarborough sands.





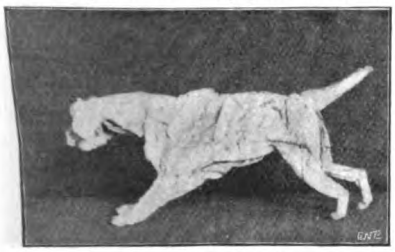
NOAH'S ANCHORS.

The Rev. Henry W. Pells, of 20, William Street, Woodstock, Cape Town, sends an interesting photograph of four enormous anchors supposed to have been in use on Noah's Ark. The strange relics are to be found at Kaironan, N. Africa. They are about 15ft. in length and very solid, while some idea of their size can be gained by comparison with the English missionaries in the picture. The man in drab is the custodian of these jealously-guarded monsters; he asserts that one of the anchors is of pure gold, the other of silver, the third of bronze, and the fourth of iron.

* Copyright, 1900, by George Newnes, Limited.

A NEWSPAPER DOG.

Mr. Albert Fleming, of 3, Verulam Buildings, Gray's Inn, says: "I send you the photo. of a dog made out of a piece of newspaper. It was fashioned



at a public dinner, when one of the guests took a bit of newspaper from his pocket, and in a few minutes produced the above excellent result. Observe the life-like pose of his hind legs."

A HORSE-SHOE HOUSE.

"There was an old woman who lived in a shoe," but she was content with one shoe, although her family is said to have been a very large one. Thirteen old horse-shoes were hanging this spring on the back of a garden wall close to an old boiler which workmen were removing and replacing by a new one—a very noisy piece of work—when, in no wise deterred by this, a pair of wrens built their nest in the midst of

the cluster of horse-shoes and then brought up their young. The mother bird having been found one day drowned in a pail of water standing near, her mate tended and cared for their young until they were fledged and flown. The horse-shoes containing the nest, as shown in the photo., still hang on the wall at Everthorpe Hall, Brough, East Yorkshire. We are indebted for this photo. to Miss H. Wetherell, of Randolph Gardens, Kilburn, N.W.

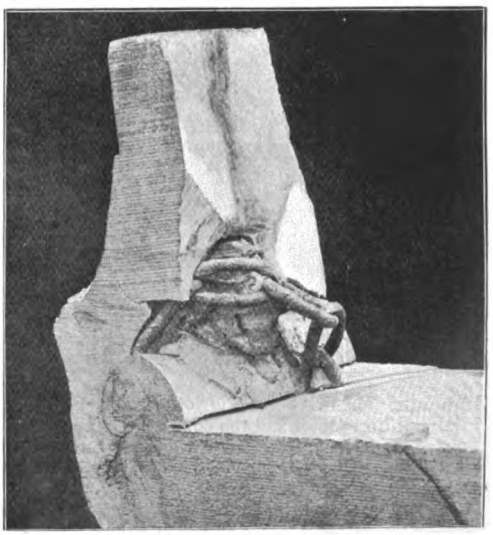
THE MILKMAN'S PILLAR-BOX.

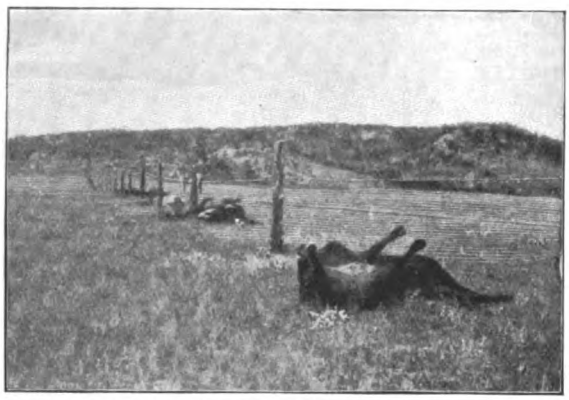
This is perhaps the most extraordinary pillar-box on record. A lovely spot, not far from Godalming,

Surrey, is the proud possessor of this extraordinary pillar-box freak, which was originally made out of an old milk-can. Mr. H. R. Blanford, of St. Martin's House, Dover College, is the sender of this photo.

HOW DID IT GET THERE?

Mr. Harold Hill, of 41, Victoria Road, Broomhall Park, Sheffield, says: "The accompanying photograph shows a piece of iron chain embedded in the trunk of a tree which was grown in Padley Wood, Derbyshire. It is impossible to say how the chain became embedded, but the links of the chain can be seen on both sides of the block of wood as shown on the left-hand side of the photo. The iron was not noticed in the first place until an attempt was made to cut the tree across. The wood is very much discoloured where it has been in contact with the chain, which appears to have been embedded many years."





EIGHTEEN COWS ELECTROCUTED.

The unfortunate beasts shown here were surprised by a thunderstorm away from all shelter. Thunderstorms are frequent in this region, on the foothills of the Rockies, but it is seldom that cattle suffer. The miserable animals whose carcasses can be seen in the photo. got too near the wire fence, which, acting as a conductor, became for an instant a perfect electrocuting machine. Mrs. N. Oliver-Rutherford, Edgerston, Jedburgh, N.B., kindly sends this photo.

NATURE'S "COMPLEAT ANGLER."

The bass shown hooked on the thorn of a tree came there through its own folly entirely. During the

high waters in the beginning of 1897 Lost Creek, in Miami Co., Ohio, and the country around became flooded, and the fishes, finding a wider area for their rambles, started up country. This poor creature was trapped, however, in the manner shown, and was still hanging on the tree in Sept., 1899, when Mr. Perry McElwain, of Casstown, Ohio, sent us this picture.

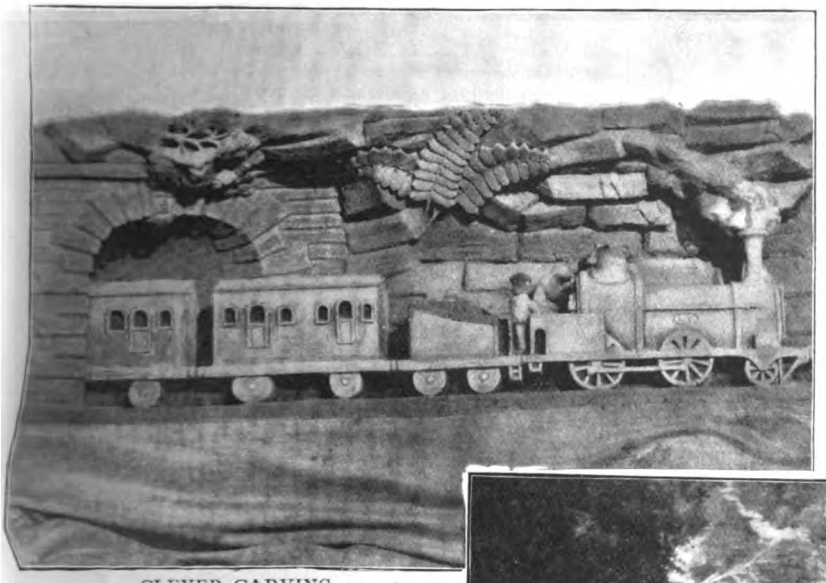
ONLY BLOOMS AT NIGHT.

Here is an extraordinary freak of Nature. It is the portrait of the night-flowering Sirius, which only blooms at night, and, curiously

enough, the blossom only lasts a single night. They are lovely flowers, says the sender, Mr. G. M. N. Ramsay, of Drumore, Blairgowrie, N.B., and their portraits have to be taken by lamplight and a mirror, which in this case was done by Mr. G. B. Ramsay, Karachi, India.

GOOD FOR THE TAILOR.

Mr. F. L. Sinclair, of New Market, New Hampshire, has taken a photo. of three men in a coat. This extraordinary garment is a *bonâ-fide* one, and measured 72in. around the waist and 84in. around the chest.

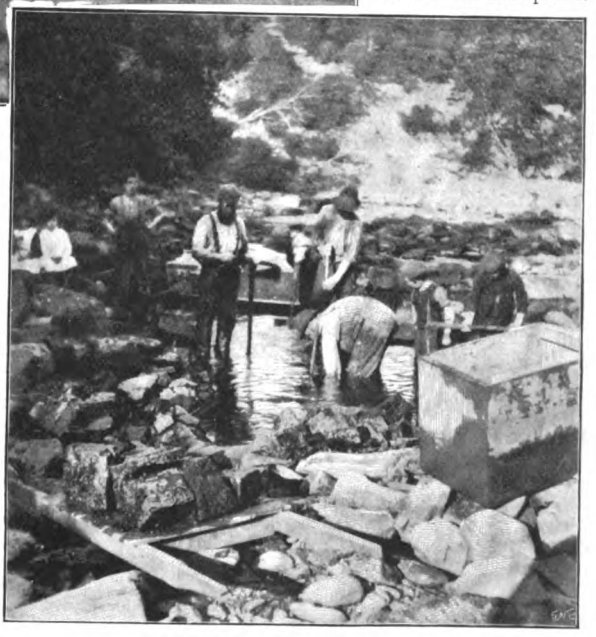


CLEVER CARVING.

The accompanying photograph is one of a railway train emerging from a tunnel. It is carved out of a single piece of stone. The block is 30in. long by 15in. wide by 8in. thick. This probably quite unique piece of work was the property of a late well-known engine-driver on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, Mr. William Whalley, of Blackburn. It was carved by a working stonemason friend named Stocks. The photograph is sent us by Mr. Leonard King-Wilkinson, of Middlewood, near Clitheroe, to whom and whose eldest brother the stone was bequeathed by the late owner. Photo. by Mr. R. P. Gregson, F.R.P.S., Blackburn.

A "PLOUGH-WOMAN."

Miss Hannah Glegg, of 197, Ferry Road, Leith, Edinburgh, in sending this interesting photo., says: "A woman who can plough is certainly a rarity, but a woman who ploughs the soil which yields our daily bread is, I think, unique. Cecilia Wood, who boasts this proud distinction, lives on a croft on Sir A. Baird's estate of Rickarton, near Stonehaven. She manages the croft entirely by herself, and in addition possesses a turning-lathe with which she augments her income by making wooden farm implements. The inclosed photo. of 'Cecie' (by which name she is known in the neighbourhood) was taken while competing in the local ploughing match, which she won, beating all the men."

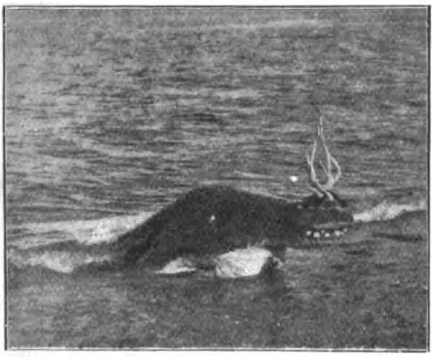


"COAL IS CHEAP TO-DAY."

The scene represented in this photo.

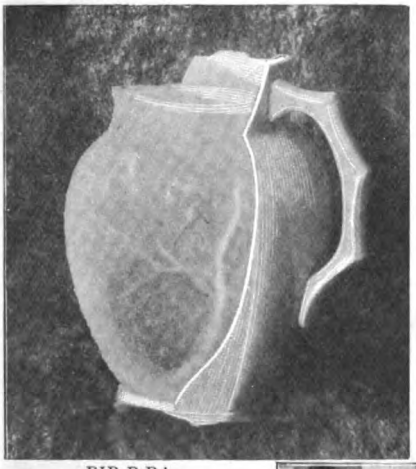
From a Photograph.

is that of certain tenants of his late Grace the Duke of Hamilton digging for coal in the bed of the River Avon, which flows through his policies known as the "High Parks." The seam of coal curiously crops up here into the bed of the river, so that when the water is low the adjoining tenants, who occupy the hamlet of Avonbank, habitually enter the stream and dig their year's supply of fuel from this extraordinary source. Mr. David Miller, solicitor, of 52, Cadzow Street, Hamilton, very kindly sends this interesting instance of coal *ad lib.*



A SEA-MONSTER.

The sea-monster shown herewith almost caused a Puget Sound lighthouse-keeper to lose his position. One day he made this monster, with the aid of a saw, a little red paint, and some shells for eyes and teeth. He told a reporter (confidentially) that a sea-monster had come ashore at his station. This news appeared in the paper and caused several hundreds of people to trudge to the Light to see the curiosity. Some were disappointed, and sent urgent demands to the Lighthouse Board, asking the discharge of the deceptive keeper. The Board, however, regarded the joke in the manner intended, and added the monster to their collection of curiosities at head-quarters. Mr. J. G. McCundy, of Port Townsend, Washington, has sent this amusing picture.



BIR-R-R!

Mr. W. H. Brown, of St. Bathans, Otago, New Zealand, has taken this remarkable instance of frost in an inhabited room. The bursting of this water-jug through the freezing of the water inside was caused by one night's frost only, and is a remarkable instance of the severity of the late winter in that locality. A man was sleeping in the same room. Bir-r-r!

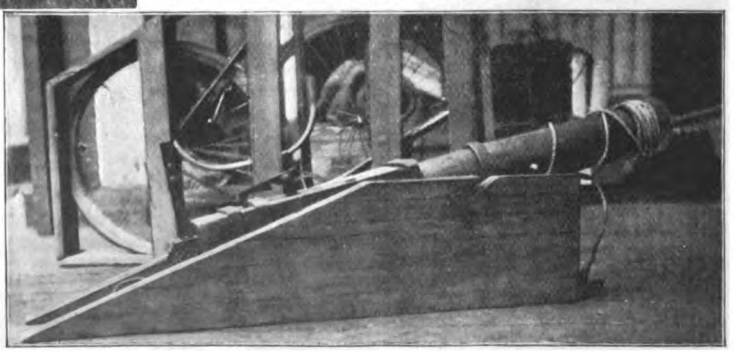
A DANGEROUS PLACE.

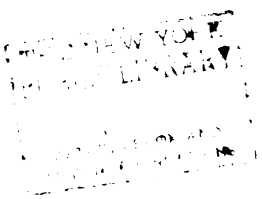
The men on the wires were watching the parade given in honour of Captain Dyer, of the cruiser *Baltimore*, first commander under Dewey at Manila. Not being able to see from the ground in the vast crowd, they climbed the pole, and a very few venturesome ones crawled out on the wires. Besides being in danger of falling, they were also very much in danger of being killed by electricity. The wires supply heavy current for the street railway on this

street. If the insulation of the wires should happen to have been worn, they would have been killed immediately. They were about 25ft. or 30ft. from the pavement. This picture was taken on September 12th, 1899, by Mr. Leo Crane, 1729, Aiken Street, Baltimore, Md.

A WOODEN CANNON.

Many are the relics that have been brought home by American soldiers as souvenirs of the war with Spain, and among those there is, perhaps, none more curious or out of the way than this wooden gun strengthened with iron bands and clamps. The man who made it was a patriot; the man who fired it was a hero. We have received this photo. from Mr. M. C. Craft, of San Francisco.





"SHE WAS CLINGING, WHITE AND SHAKEN, TO THE BARS OF THE LITTLE BALCONY."

(*See page* 131.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xix. FEBRUARY, 1900. No. 110.

Secret Service.

BY WALTER RAGGE.

Author of "The Face at the Door."

"SIR WILLIAM is very unwell, Mr. Risingham," said the old butler; "I doubt he's too unwell to see you, sir. If I've turned one patient away this morning I've turned a 'undred. Influenza it is, sir. Caught him cruel."

Risingham slipped something into the butler's hand. Wonderful is the healing power of gold. Surely, no other mineral known to science can by external application to one body reduce the fever in another!

"If you'll step into this room, sir, I'll speak to Dr. Parsons; he's with Sir William all day now, sir, doin' some of his work for him. I've no doubt Sir William will be able to see you in a moment, sir."

Risingham walked into the waiting-room, while the butler trotted noiselessly upstairs, and sat down on one of those huge, dark, comfortable chairs that lurk in the waiting-rooms of fashionable physicians. He tried to concentrate his attention on the morning's *Times;* his own name occurred more than once in a leading article and again in the Parliamentary reports, but he could not read. The thousands of anxious sufferers who had waited in that great, gloomy room must have filled the air with microbes of uneasiness and self-distrust. It was in vain that Risingham told himself that he was visiting Sir William merely to make assurance doubly sure that his health was good; that nothing but a little overwork and perhaps late hours—that, in short, he was as fit as possible, as fit as a man should be who was about to be married. It was no use: he was in the great doctor's house, and the irrational, inexpressible fear that lies in wait there even for the healthy had seized him by the throat. He jumped to his feet with a laugh of self-contempt, and began to walk round the room, looking as his predecessors had looked at the great, dark portraits that hung on every wall.

"I'm like a fussy old maid," he said to himself. "Thirty-two, as strong as a horse, never had anything the matter with me, and here I am twittering as if I were a medical dictionary, full of diseases from one side to the other. It's this gloomy hole, I expect. That old boy"—he was looking at the picture over the door—"his face is ugly enough to give anyone the blues. Looks as if there were something pretty bad the matter with him. I wonder who he was? Oh, there's the name: 'John Pinton, of Pinton Hall.' That's Sir William's grandfather, I remember. Well, it's lucky for him as a fashionable physician that the faces of our forefathers are not always fixed upon us as their sins, their little tendencies to drink, their diseases——"

He stopped short. Suddenly with startling clearness there came back to him the memory of his own grandfather's death. He had been a child at the time, and though grieving for his father's bitter sorrow he had not understood, and his parents had never spoken of that dreadful month. But he knew that the old man had suffered terribly from the disease that killed him. What if that disease——

The door opened.

"Sir William can see you, sir," said the butler; "I'll take you up to his room at once, sir."

Risingham followed the old man upstairs, chafing at his slowness, and was ushered into Sir William's bedroom. The great physician was lying in bed, propped up with pillows; on a small table at the bedside two deadly-looking little bottles and a granulated glass were standing. A dark, clean-shaved man was standing by the bed: he advanced to meet Risingham, holding a bundle of papers in his hand.

"Good morning, Mr. Risingham," he said, quietly. "Sir William has, I'm sorry to say, almost lost his voice for the time being. He has decided to see you, however, and if you will tell him your symptoms, he will, I hope, be able to write directions for you—or, if not,

to dictate to me later in the day. I am Dr. Parsons. I shall be in the consulting-room downstairs if you care to leave any message later. Good day," and he passed out of the room, leaving Risingham and the physician together.

Risingham approached the bed.

"RISINGHAM APPROACHED THE BED."

"I'm so sorry to see that you're so ill, Sir William," he began, but the doctor cut him short with an impatient wave of the hand, and, sitting down in a chair at the bedside, he began to recount his symptoms. Sir William heard him to the end without a sign; then, with a slight smile on his handsome, stern old face, he motioned to his patient to come nearer.

"I think," he began, in a hoarse whisper, "that I can deal with your case *viva voce*, Mr. Risingham. There's nothing——"

But he had overrated his powers. The exertion brought on a violent choking fit of coughing; the old man lay back spent and shaken, and signed to Risingham to leave him. Risingham got up, and stood looking doubtfully at the doctor's face. A peevish frown contracted the bushy eyebrows; the lips moved, but no words were audible, and the thin, white hand still pointed to the door. Reluctantly the disappointed patient bowed and left the room. On reaching the consulting-room door he knocked and entered. Dr. Parsons was writing at the desk.

"Finished?" he asked, with a smile.

"Well, no," said Risingham; "I told him my symptoms, and he was about to speak, but a sudden attack of coughing——"

"That was what I feared," said Dr. Parsons. "He must not speak above a whisper, and even that, but I will get him to write out any directions, Mr. Risingham, and send them to you as early as possible this afternoon."

"This afternoon?" repeated Risingham; "but if I wait, couldn't you get it done this morning?"

"No, I fear not. There is another patient—now, don't be angry, sir; it is a case of great urgency, and terribly trying and distressing, not only to the patient, but to Sir William also."

"What is it?" asked Risingham, shortly.

"No, my dear sir, I'm afraid that wouldn't be correct. I cannot possibly tell you that. Etiquette—— Oh, must you go? James, show Mr. Risingham—good morning."

Risingham muttered a reply and went out. As he stood in the doorway buttoning his glove a small brougham with a splendid bay mare in the shafts dashed up, stopping opposite Sir William's house. A tall man stepped out, and roughly pushing aside his footman, who had made a motion as if to assist him, he hurried up the steps. Risingham saw his face: he was Sir Charles Adair, one of the leaders of society at the moment.

"Good morning, Sir Charles," said he, holding out his hand.

The other looked at him for a moment,

but without any sign of recognition, and hurried into the house, the door of which was still held open by the obsequious James. Risingham went on his way, wondering.

"Poor devil," he said, at last, "he's the patient that fellow was talking of, I suppose. He's pretty bad, I'm afraid. Never saw such a look in a face before. Bah! I can't get it out of my mind. Poor devil, poor devil!" and getting into a hansom he drove off towards Pall Mall. . . . .

The newsboys had something better to cry out that evening than "Latest Scores" or "Winners." As Risingham came out of his club after writing innumerable letters he was nearly knocked down by a stalwart ruffian bearing a mass of pink paper in his arms and yelling, at the top of his voice, "Sooeysoide of a Hem. P. 'Orrible death of Sir Charles Adair!"

Risingham was filled with horror and compassion. His club had been almost empty, and he had not looked at the latest telegrams on the board in the hall. This was a horrible way to hear of the death of a man who was almost a friend, whom he had seen that very morning. He bought a paper and read. The poor wretch had shot himself in his own house at about two o'clock that afternoon.

"I wonder," said Risingham to himself, "what the doctor told him?"

When he reached his rooms, with an effort he shook off all these gloomy thoughts, and wrote a cheerful letter to Gladys Humphrey, who before July was out would be Gladys Risingham. It seemed a desecration to write to her anywhere but in the quietness of his own rooms, and when he had finished and dressed for dinner he felt a strange sense of help and comfort such as comes to some few of us after prayer. It was past twelve when he returned to his rooms. There were three letters awaiting him: one from his solicitor, the other from a friend, and the third in a strange handwriting. He sent his man to bed and sat down to read, beginning with the letter addressed in the unknown, tottering handwriting. He opened it and saw, with an indescribable thrill, that it was dated from Sir William Pinton's house. This was what he read:—

"DEAR SIR,—I was unable to tell you before you left me so hurriedly this morning all I had meant to say. You must make excuses for me; I am very far from well. I think, however, that you gathered my meaning. I am very sorry to say that I do not think an operation could have more than a merely temporary effect. The disease has been left unchecked too long. I will not insult you by commiserating with you: I am not a clergyman, and do not say that it is God's will that the sins of the fathers should be visited on the children. But it is the way in which this world is managed. I am very incoherent, I fear. I am very sorry for you. It is my duty to tell you not to hope anything from violent measures. If cancer reaches a certain point it is beyond surgery. . . . ."

The letter vanished from Risingham's sight in eddying, black mists; he seemed to be whirled away to an immeasurable distance and to be looking down on the world as a stage where puppets leaped and ran, dwindled and swelled before his eyes. He saw the old breakfast-room at home, saw his mother sitting pale and anxious at the table, saw his

"HE SEEMED TO BE WHIRLED AWAY."

father enter, and read again in his haggard face the news that his grandfather was dead. He saw himself pacing the doctor's waiting-room; saw Sir Charles Adair hurrying up the doctor's steps, and then with a sudden shock he found himself sitting in his own arm-chair and saying, aloud, "He must have told Adair something of this sort."

Yes, that was it: he remembered the fierce despair that he had read in the poor wretch's haggard face; he had come to hear the worst, had heard it, gone home, and killed himself. The sins of the fathers—yes, that was the way the world was made. The power that arranged these things knew how to strike—death, such a death, would have been hard to bear even for Gilbert Risingham, the struggling barrister of twenty-seven, in his lonely chambers; how much harder was it for the successful man, the rising member of Parliament; how intolerably hard and cruel for the accepted lover of Gladys Humphrey! Adair had found the short way out of his troubles. Should he follow his example? No; suicide might be allowed to the lonely man: the Lords of Life and Death had closed that door for him; he must give no pain to others where he could avoid it: he must die like a gentleman, must play the game out to the end.

"No unnecessary pain," he muttered to himself, and, rising, crossed the room to his writing-desk. "I will write to Gladys to-night and give her up. She need never know. She is too proud to ask for reasons if I give none. I will just say that I cannot marry her."

He sat biting his pen for some time; then with a violent effort of will he began to write: "DEAR GLADYS—or perhaps I should say Miss Humphrey—it is with great regret that I discover that the exigencies of my career compel me for the present to abandon all thoughts of matrimony. I cannot say when these complications will cease, and do not wish you to wait for such a consummation." "Consummation" he scratched out, then, after a pause, substituted "cessation." "Therefore, dear Miss Humphrey, I have no alternative but to restore to you your freedom from any engagement to me, and to remain, yours sincerely, GILBERT RISINGHAM."

He read the letter through, with a grim smile; then having sealed, stamped, and addressed it, he took his hat and went out to post it. This done, he returned to his rooms and sat down again to think.

"They, whoever they may be," he said to himself, "have struck at my love and at my career. Well, I have answered one stroke. Gladys will give me up: by Jove, she might even be glad to hear that I was dead. Well played there, I flatter myself. Now for my career. But first let's have another look at this letter." He picked it up from the floor and read the concluding sentence: "Since you were so anxious to know the limit that I set to your powers of fighting this terrible disease, I must tell you, though it is not according to my custom—I fear you cannot live for more than six months."

"Poor, poor old ass," muttered Risingham, "talking about his 'custom.' As if I cared for customs or etiquette now. Well, one can't do much in six months. I'm afraid that my career must be counted as one to the enemy. No, by Jove, I won't give in yet."

He looked at his watch. "Half-past one. I'll give the matter a thorough thinking out." So saying, he settled himself down in his chair with his eyes fixed on the ceiling. He sat like this for three hours without moving, without speaking—then he sprang lightly to his feet.

"Yes, that's it," he said, striking his hand on the table. "I'll go and see him to-morrow morning—this morning, rather. Mustn't shock Roberts by sitting here; better get to bed. Decency before all things." He opened the window and looked out into the night. There was no moon, but the stars shone clearly in the absolutely cloudless sky.

"Yes, my friends the enemy," said Risingham, waving his hand vaguely towards the heavens, "I mayn't be able to beat you, but, by George, I'll spoil your win for you." So saying, he went to bed, where his man found him in the morning.

"Breakfast at once, please, Roberts," said he, "and have a hansom at the door at nine sharp."

Still firm in his determination to avoid the unusual, Risingham made desultory but desperate attacks upon the breakfast.

"You needn't come down," he said, lighting a cigarette. "The hansom is at the door? Very good."

He strolled leisurely downstairs and stepped into the hansom, giving the address as he did so. "Nothing out of the way, so far," he said to himself; "rather early for me to be about, that's all."

He arrived safely at the house of the Great Man, paid the driver his proper fare, disregarded his improper language, and rang the bell. He was well known to the Great Man's satellites, though not to the Great

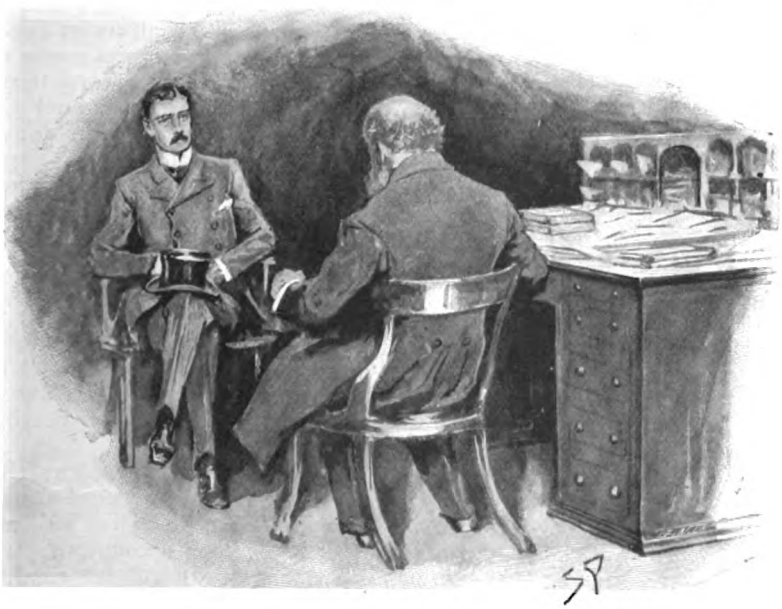
Man himself, the reason being that the present holder of the Great Post, which must not be mentioned here, had taken over house and footman from his predecessor, who was a friend of Risingham's.

"His lordship is in the study, sir," said the youthful footman, conquering his surprise at seeing a visitor at such an hour.

"Show me in, then," said Risingham, quietly.

In another moment he stood in the Great Presence.

"I fear my visit must appear unusual," he said, quietly; "but it is important."



"I WILL PUT IT IN A NUTSHELL."

"Quite so, quite so," replied the Great Man, eyeing him curiously; "pray sit down, Mr.—er—Mr. Risingham."

The two men sat down opposite each other.

"I must begin at the beginning, I'm afraid," said Risingham. "I know we belong to opposite parties, but I must ask you to believe me in this, that, next to one thing only, which thing I have successfully eliminated, the dearest wish of my heart all through my life has been the welfare of my country."

The Great Man bowed, shooting a most questioning glance at his guest's face the while.

"I had hoped to serve my country in the ordinary way; that is now, I grieve to say, impossible. Nothing remains, therefore, but to find an extraordinary way."

"Pardon me," said the Great Man, with his eyes fixed on Risingham, "I do not follow you, I'm afraid. I have had the pleasure of hearing you speak before now, but at present——"

"Quite so," answered Risingham, blandly; "I will put it in a nutshell. I am condemned to death—not by the law, at least not by man's law, which only punishes; but by that other law that indulges in jokes and blood feuds and such antiquated freaks—no, I will be quite plain with you, sir. I am suffering from an incurable disease—oh, I assure you it's quite a common incident. I have six months at the outside in which to do any work I can find to do for my country. Well, sir, I have thought it out: six months is too short a time for building up, but not for pulling down. I could devise nothing new in that period which could benefit the nation, especially as Parliament won't be sitting for more than half of it. But I could remove something that is an obstacle, a very serious obstacle, in England's path. And that is why I have come to you, sir. With your help I may do more in those six months than I could have done in sixty years. I put myself in your hands: you

do not often get such an instrument as a desperate man, with no fear either of this life or the next, with no wish but the good of his country. Use me, sir; I shall not fail you, and," he added, with a laugh, "I'll pay all expenses: so you need not fear the British taxpayer."

The two men looked at one another in silence; then, "This is a strange proposition, Mr. Risingham," said the Great Man; "you mean——"

"I mean this, sir," interrupted Risingham, with growing excitement, "there is no need to mention names; I wish to free your lordship from all dangerous responsibility. I am here; I put myself in your hands; there are many obstacles to be removed; I wish to remove that which is most dangerous to the State; in your position at this moment you are better fitted to judge than I, so I come to you and ask you to choose the obstacle that is to go."

"Obstacle!" murmured the Great Man.

"Yes, sir, obstacle," went on Risingham, impatiently. "I could name one, sir, not many miles from Pretoria."

The Great Man rose slowly to his feet.

"That is your meaning, then," he said, softly—"murder?"

"No; single-handed war, sir," was the answer. "One death, for mine doesn't count, I'm dead already; one death, on the one side, and freedom and wealth for millions on the other. Choose that, sir; choose that, and, by George, I'll beat them yet."

"Them?" said the Great Man, interrogatively.

"They, whoever they may be, who have played this joke on me, and tried to throw me on the rubbish-heap before my time," said Risingham, fiercely.

"Ah, quite so," was the answer; "quite so. Well, Mr. Risingham, these are deep waters. I understand you to be desirous of helping your country and avenging yourself on these mysterious powers, who, you say, have injured you? Very good. And you wish to do that—by removing an obstacle. We will keep to your excellent rule of naming no names, if you please. You say you are especially fitted for this task. You can obey?"

"I can," replied Risingham.

"Very good. Then be in your chambers at four o'clock this afternoon, please. I will send my agents to you then, and you will kindly obey their instructions and answer any questions they may put to you. You understand?"

"Yes, sir," said Risingham. "I give you my word. I am at your orders now. Only use me well. Good-bye."

The two men shook hands, looking each other in the eyes, and Risingham went out with a light heart. The Great Man on the other hand heaved a sigh, and muttering to himself, "Poor fellow, poor fellow!" sat down at his desk. He wrote two notes and rang the bell. "Charles," he said, to the young footman who appeared to answer it, "get into a hansom and drive with these notes to Dr. Waters and Dr. Peterson, and bring an answer from each of them. Go at once."

The footman departed, and the Great Man settled himself down to his morning's work.

Meanwhile Risingham was dashing about London: to his chambers at the Temple; to his rooms to give Roberts some orders about the reception of his visitors that afternoon; and, finally, to an Indian and Colonial outfitter. Here he gave orders for an extensive supply of various articles, beginning with khaki breeches and ending with a revolver. It was now past two, and he began to feel both hungry and tired. The nervous tension was telling on him already; he was holding himself in too tightly.

"Hang it, I must stay better than this, or I shall crumple up before the race is half over," he said to himself. "I'll try what a bottle of fizz can do. Excellent thing, stimulant, when a horse is getting overdone and stale."

He went into a restaurant that adjoined the outfitter's and ordered lunch, and the morning paper, which he had not yet seen. There was a long account of Adair's death. "The unhappy man," he read, "had long suffered from hereditary cancer; he had, so Sir William Pinton informs us, been desperately seeking for a cure. On the morning of his death he paid Sir William a visit, and entreated him to operate, or at least to hold out some hopes of a successful operation. This Sir William was unable to do; but without listening to his advice, Sir Charles rushed hurriedly away. Sir William informs our representative that a letter with full directions was forwarded to Sir Charles's rooms without delay, but the unhappy man had killed himself immediately on reaching home, and could not have received it. Sir William, who is in delicate health, was naturally much distressed by this terrible affair."

"Much distressed at losing a valuable patient," said Risingham to himself. "Well, he's lost two, but the second won't make

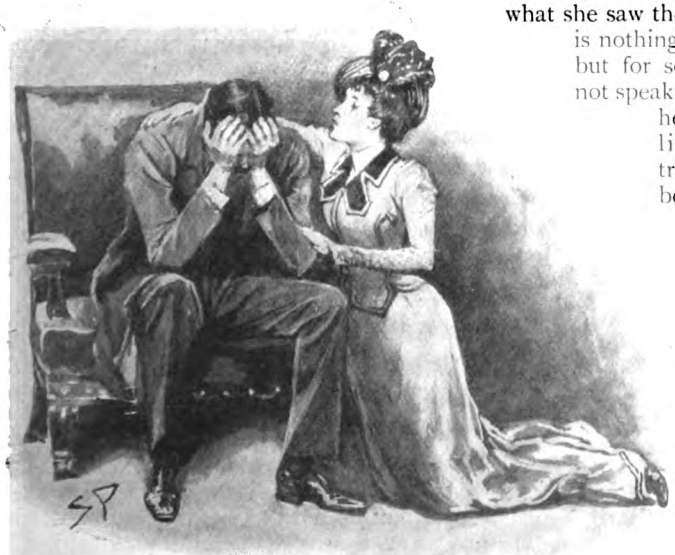
quite such a splash—at least, not just yet. Confounded old hypocrite, why doesn't he turn his knowledge to some account? He's got more than six months, why doesn't he find a cure? There, there, steady, old horse. Bottle of '43, please, waiter."

After lunch Risingham sat and smoked for about an hour, and then strolled leisurely towards his rooms. It was past four o'clock when he reached his own door. The afternoon was close and sultry, and one of those fogs that settle down on London in such weather made the little entrance-hall of his chambers almost dark. He opened the door of his smoking-room and went in. A woman who had been standing at the window turned sharply round as he entered, ran swiftly across the room towards him, and threw her arms about his neck.

"Oh, Gilbert, my poor darling," she cried, "how glad I am you have come back, and how you must have suffered."

He had hardened himself for nearly everything that Fate could bring, but not for this. "Gladys," he said, hoarsely, "why have you come? Oh, my God, they've beaten me." And pushing her away, he flung himself into a chair and buried his face in his hands.

In an instant she was on her knees at his side. "Oh, Gilbert," she cried, "it's all a mistake. That letter was not for you." He lifted his head and stared into her face.



"'OH, GILBERT,' SHE CRIED, 'IT'S ALL A MISTAKE.'"

"What do you mean?" he said slowly, pausing between each word.

"It's a mistake," she went on, still kneeling beside him, "a terrible mistake. That letter, that dreadful letter, was meant for Sir Charles Adair, and not for you. See, here is yours—it was found in the poor man's rooms to-day: we found it, Dr. Parsons and I."

"Dr. Parsons?" said Risingham, vaguely, wondering whether this were not some fantastic dream.

"Yes, my dearest, Dr. Parsons. I got your letter, your poor letter, this morning, not an hour after I had your first letter. I came here at once. Roberts told me that he did not know where you had gone, but that you would be back at four o'clock. I asked him if you were ill, and he said no, and then I said I would wait and come in here, and here I saw that terrible letter. I drove round to Sir William's and showed it him, and told him who I was, and then he told me that he had written to you to tell you that you needed nothing but a little rest, and that this letter was for poor Sir Charles. Then Dr. Parsons and I went to Sir Charles's rooms, and there we found it—see, it begins: 'Dear Mr. Risingham,' though the envelope was addressed to Sir Charles. Oh, my darling, my poor, tortured darling, it is all right now," and she burst into tears, clinging closely round his neck.

He was so still and held himself so straight that after a few seconds she looked up anxiously into his face.

"Oh, Gilbert," she cried, aghast at what she saw there, "what is it? There is nothing else?" His lips moved, but for some moments he could not speak. Then at last, "Beaten," he muttered, forcing his lips into a horrible travesty of a smile. "Clean bowled, this time. They're too strong for me, Gladys, much too strong."

"Who are too strong?" she cried, watching his face with eyes full of dreadful expectation. "What is it, Gilbert? Tell me. I am strong. I can help you, and oh! my dearest, dearest boy, why did you try to give me up?

My place is with you always. Tell me what you mean. Oh, quick, Gilbert; tell me, tell me."

"I cannot tell you, Gladys," said the poor fellow, struggling to speak quietly; "at least, not all. I thought I was condemned to die, that I had lost you, that I had six months to live. I meant to make use of those six months, and pledged myself to do something that may help my country, but must cause my death."

"But you were mistaken: they cannot hold you to your promise now. Tell them it is all a terrible mistake, and they will release you, Gilbert."

Risingham shook his head. "No, my dear, dear girl," he answered, sadly; "I am bound: I went of my own accord, not to a friend, but to one who is, in public, an opponent; I pledged myself to him; if I break that pledge, if I——"

"Do not break it then, Gilbert," cried the girl; "go to him and promise that as long as you live you will never breathe a word of what he said to you to a living soul—go to him now at once and tell him that."

Risingham smiled sadly down into her eager, tear-stained face.

"I can't do it, Gladys," he said. "He said little, it is true; but he would never have said a word to one who was not about to die. I cannot tell what another man might feel. I must decide for myself as best I can, Gladys."

He stopped abruptly: there was a ring at the bell: he looked hastily at the clock: it was nearly half-past four. "They are here, Gladys," he said, in a fierce whisper. "You must go: no, no, you mustn't stop me now. There is nothing to hope for, my own dearest girl, nothing: but if you will wait till they are gone we can say good-bye. Now go—go into that room."

He opened the door that led into his dining-room, and almost thrust her through it. "Be brave," he whispered, and stooping he kissed her hand, then hurried back into the smoking-room, closing and locking the door behind him. At the same moment the outer door opened and Roberts appeared.

"Two gentlemen to see you, sir. Are you disengaged? I told them you was hout, sir, but they insisted on waiting. Strangers, sir, and give no names."

"Show them in here at once, please, Roberts," said Risingham, quietly.

The discreet servant vanished. Reappearing almost immediately, he ushered in two gentlemen, whom he favoured with a searching glance of the deep mistrust that every good servant has for those who give no name.

"Two gentlemen to see you, sir," he repeated, unnecessarily, and then departed, softly closing the door.

Risingham looked keenly at his visitors. They were both men of middle age, well, though quietly, dressed, and as far as appearances went of a perfectly common-place gentility, with nothing of the conspirator about them. "Good evening," he said, quietly; "I have been expecting you. Pray sit down."

Gladys Humphrey had heard the step of Roberts retreating towards his pantry, and knew that the arbiters of her lover's destiny and her own were now alone with Risingham, not ten yards from where she stood. She hurried on tiptoe to the door and listened. It was useless: the voices came to her indistinctly; she could not catch the words.

"I will hear what they say," she muttered, clenching her hands together and pacing the room in an agony of mingled hopes and fears.

The window was open, and as she passed it she suddenly heard the voice of one of the strangers. "Well, Mr. Risingham," he was saying, "let us come . . . ." and then she could hear nothing but unmeaning sound. She looked out of the window: below her was the narrow strip of garden that belonged to these buildings; it was empty. Outside the smoking-room window was a low and narrow balcony meant to hold nothing more substantial than a flower-box: would it bear her weight? She hesitated: then again she caught the indistinguishable murmur of words that must mean so much for her lover and herself.

"I will hear," she said again, "I will learn their secret; then, if I can't stop him, at least I can make him take me with him."

She stepped out on to the sill: it was about a foot wide, and extended some three or four feet beyond the side of the window. Then came a gap of three feet and then the broader sill on which stood the little iron balcony. Two bold steps and the thing could be done. Gladys had lived all her life in the country: she knew her strength, she thought she could trust her nerves. Stepping back into the room she kicked off her shoes, climbed once more on to the sill, and shivered.

"What a coward, what a *beastly* coward," she said, half aloud. "I've made up my mind to listen like a spy: I've made up my mind to go with him and die with him, and yet I can't let go of this curtain. I will—I will!"

She did it; did it with a suddenness that nearly precipitated her into the garden below. In another second she was clinging, white and shaken, to the bars of the little balcony.

"Pray God they didn't hear," she murmured.

The voices in the smoking-room went on, undisturbed. With a last effort she climbed over the low rail and flattened herself against the wall close beside the window. Risingham was speaking, and she heaved a sigh of relief: she could hear every word now.

"I suggested President Kruger," he was saying; "I could think of no other individual whose death would be of so great service to England at the present moment."

"Precisely," answered one of the strangers, in a soft, smooth voice. "President Kruger. You have no personal animus in the matter, I believe?"

"None at all," said Risingham; "I merely wish to do what is of the greatest advantage to England. As I pointed out this morning, I can do no service; at least, I thought I could do none — save by removing an obstacle."

"Just so; and you would be prepared to start at once?"

"Almost at once."

"You would have no objections to coming with us?"

"None."

"Very good, Mr. Risingham. Your mission then is settled. You have determined, you say, to serve the State by removing an obstacle, that is, in plain language—we need not fear to use plain language—by killing someone whom you consider especially dangerous to England?"

"No, I left that to you, or rather to your chief," said Risingham. "I will do the deed and take the consequences—all the consequences. But I left it to those who are in a better position to judge of such things than I to decide whose death would be the most beneficial to England at the time."

"Just so, just so; and you suggest President Kruger? Well, I think this is quite satisfactory?"

"Quite," replied a deep voice that Gladys had not heard.

"'WHAT DO YOU MEAN?' GASPED RISINGHAM."

"Perfectly satisfactory. And now, Mr. Risingham, shall we be moving?"

There was a sound of chairs being pushed back; Gladys could bear the strain of waiting no longer. She dashed through the open French window into the room, and startled the conspirators nearly out of their lives.

She turned to the shorter and stouter of the two strangers, detecting, with the woman's instinct, that his was the master spirit.

"Oh, sir," she began, and stopped dead; words would not come. Then, "It's all a mistake," she went on. "No, you must listen to me. He made the promise madly, foolishly—no, don't stop me, Gilbert. He thought that he was going to die. This letter, see!" she ran to the table and picked up Sir William's letter, that was still lying there. "It came to him instead of to Sir Charles Adair. It was all a mistake. You see that now, don't you? And you will let him go free? We will swear to be secret or —or if he must go, let me go with him—I must—I will go with him."

She stood, gasping for breath, her eyes fixed on the stranger's face. Risingham slowly approached her.

"It's no good, Gladys," he said, in a low whisper; "I thank you from my heart, my dearest, but it's no use."

Gladys seized his hand in hers, but did not for an instant withdraw her eyes from the face of the man who was reading the letter. He read it through, and then passed it to his colleague, who also read it slowly and carefully.

Then the two strangers looked at one another in silence. "You see?" cried Gladys, with a ring of hope in her voice.

"You received this letter last night, Mr. Risingham?" said the shorter of the two strangers, holding up his hand to Gladys to warn her to be silent.

"I did."

"And believed it to apply to you?"

"Certainly."

"And that was the reason why you came to the Secretary this morning and offered yourself for this peculiar service?"

"It was."

"Thank you. Well, I suppose we ought to apologize to you; most certainly we do beg this lady's pardon most sincerely for the anxiety we have unwittingly caused her; but you, sir, you must acknowledge that you brought your own predicament about yourself. A man may be about to die, but that is no reason for his rushing over London and offering himself as a murderer to anyone who will save him the trouble of choosing a victim."

"What do you mean?" gasped Risingham.

"Mean? I mean that this gentleman is Dr. Waters and I am Dr. Peterson, very much at your service. Two medical men, sir. You don't understand the situation? Well, we were sent for to-day by the Secretary, and told to interview you with a view to discovering the state of your mental apparatus, Mr. Risingham. And until this lady so kindly appeared as a dea ex—ex—flower-boxes, I may tell you that we had fully determined on signing a paper to the effect that you were hopelessly insane. We were wrong, it appears. You can trust us both to keep the matter secret. And now, good day."

The doctors bowed, smiled, and silently departed, leaving the lovers together: Risingham shaken and bewildered still, Gladys midway between tears and laughter, each holding the other's hand like a pair of children in the dark.

At last Risingham spoke. "What a fool, what a beast I've been!" he cried. "Oh, my dear, you ought to give me up. I thought poor Adair a coward; I—I was a coward, and a criminal as well. Can you forgive me, Gladys? I—I'll try and make it up to you."

She was crying now and clinging to him.

"I can't think of anything to say," she sobbed, "except that I have got you safe. But to-morrow, oh! to-morrow you are to have such a scolding! You have been very foolish, sir, and very wicked; but—but we'll forget that for to-day."

Illustrated Interviews.

LXIX.—M. EDOUARD DETAILLE.

THE GREATEST LIVING BATTLE PAINTER.

By Marie A. Belloc.

A NATIONAL army, like a crowned head, cannot make any direct reply to criticism or to insult, and those of her chiefs who come forward as her apologists are, not unnaturally, accused of partiality or of actual complicity in the abuses which are laid to her door. Those Englishmen and Englishwomen who find it hard at the present time to believe that anything good can come out of France should study, if only for a brief space, the life-work of Edouard Detaille, the greatest military painter of modern days, who though, as yet, in the prime of life, has already achieved an imperishable record of his country's past and present military history.

M. Detaille is the only military painter now living who not only served in the ranks and commanded as an officer during, perhaps, the greatest war of modern days, but who went through that dread experience at a most impressionable age. That he should have retained throughout the last thirty years so noble and, indeed, so heroic a conception of the episodes which went to make up "The Terrible Year" says much not only for the man himself, but also for his comrades in arms, the more so that it has been his fate to picture for future generations not a victorious but a vanquished army.

To the casual visitor introduced by some happy chance into the vast pine-panelled studio which is situated just off one of the quietest and most spacious of Parisian boulevards M. Detaille would seem a soldier rather than a painter. His tall, well-knit figure gives the impression of a man who devotes most of his time to the pursuit of athletic exercises and outdoor sports, and this is so far the case that his painting probably owes not a little of its life-like character to the fact that, whenever it be

From a] M. DETAILLE IN HIS STUDIO. *[Photograph.*

possible, he makes his preliminary studies in the open air, and preferably on the very spot where the incident he is recording actually took place.

"I owe my first love of, and interest in, the army to the fact that my grandfather was closely connected with the administrative side of Napoleon I.'s military life; it was to him that the Emperor intrusted the management of some of the most important of his transports, and my great-aunt was Madame Garnier, the wife of the Admiral Ducrest de Villeneuve. Thus my childhood was spent among those to whom the very word 'l'Empereur' conveyed magic memories, and while all the world around us was discussing the Crimean War, or, later, the Italian campaign, my forebears were still fighting the Napoleonic battles over again, and recalling to one another stories of a far more heroic age than the present seemed to them to be."

"I suppose you early made up your mind to become a soldier?"

"No, indeed," answered M. Detaille, quickly; "my one ambition was always to be an artist. At the time when I had the good fortune to enter Meissonier's studio France was at peace, and no warning shadows presaged 1870. In 1867—that is to say, when I was nineteen—I exhibited at the Salon a highly finished study of Meissonier's studio. Encouraged by a modest success, I next year ventured to show a military painting, 'The Drummer's Halt,' but, of course, I need hardly tell you that this piece of work, as, indeed, all those of my military studies done before the Franco-Prussian War, was an effort of imagination. In those days I had no leaning to any particular form of art. Like most young painters, I wished to study everything. Then came the spring and summer of 1870. I think," continued M. Detaille, slowly, "that it is impossible for any Englishman, however sympathetic and intuitive be his perceptions, to realize what such a struggle as the Franco-Prussian War meant to those engaged in it. You must suppose before you can understand even in a remote degree what a Frenchman feels concerning '*l'année terrible*'—you must suppose your own country, your own beautiful home counties, your pretty, peaceful English towns, overrun by an invader who, in spite of your desperate efforts, gains ground steadily, until he is able to impose what you yourself consider intolerable and unfair conditions. Such a war becomes in an incredibly short space of time a national conflict, in which personal and political differences are brushed aside, and every able-bodied man is simply in his own eyes, and in those of his fellows, a defender of his country."

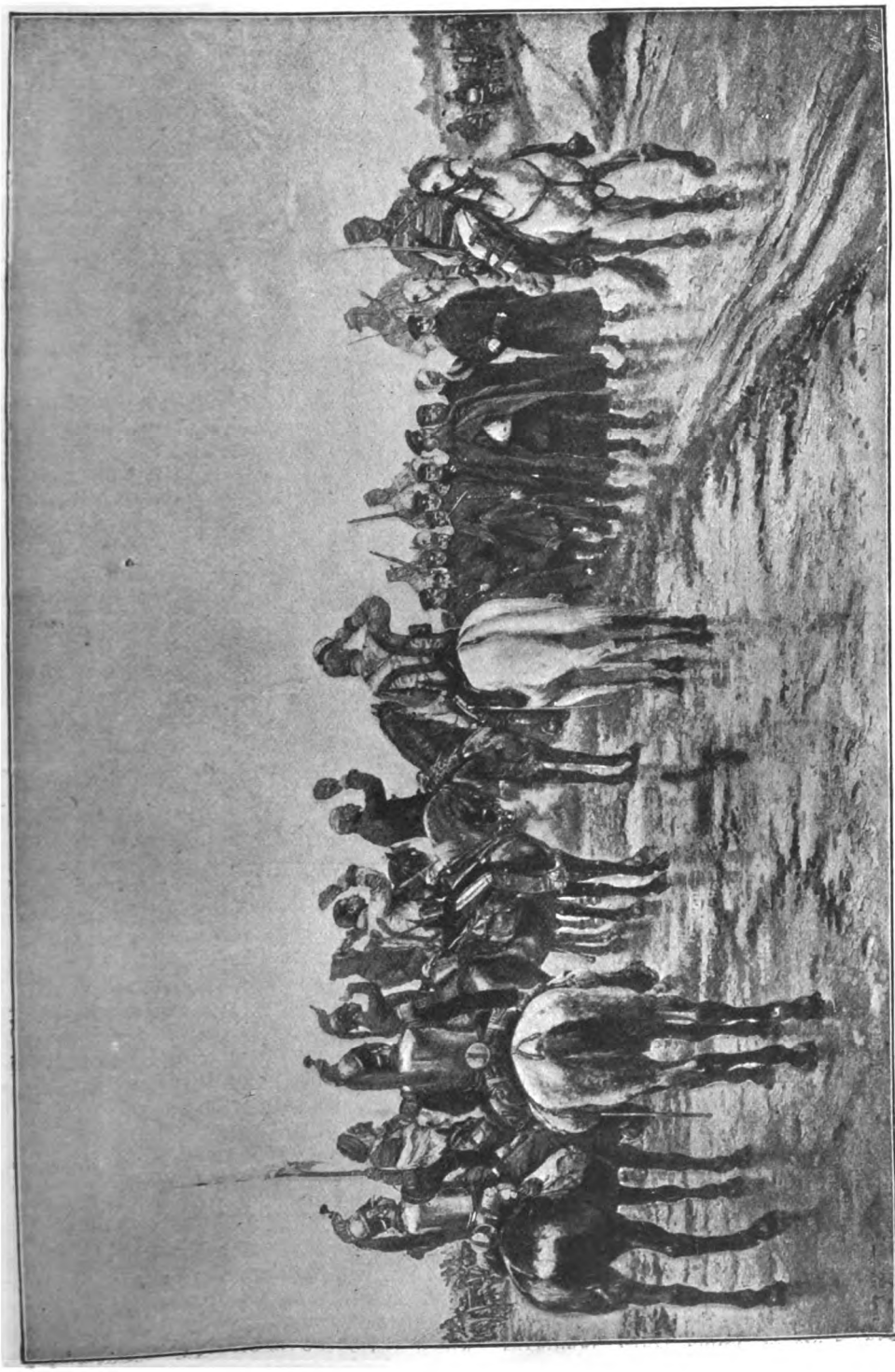
M. Detaille has every right to speak as a representative Frenchman, for, though he was himself doubly exempt from military service, both as being the eldest son of a widow and as having a brother a soldier, he lost not a moment in volunteering in the 4th Company of the 8th Battalion of Mobiles, and it was in this capacity that he was present at many of the notable sorties and skirmishes round Paris; he also took part in the Battle of Champigny, of which he afterwards executed a famous panorama.

"I suppose you never wholly merged the painter in the soldier?"

"No; I must admit that my happiest moments were spent in sketching under fire. My excuse must be that to any artist there would have been something absorbingly interesting in the lurid scenes by which I was constantly surrounded. And yet," he added, thoughtfully, "war and its attendant horrors are not really picturesque, and, though I am so far a realist that I abhor the presentation in pictorial art of what is not true, I hold most strongly that certain battle-scenes ought not to be shown in all their naked horror on canvas. I will give you one example. Take what occurs immediately after a battle. Many such scenes are ineffaceably impressed upon my mind, but, interesting as it would be from some points of view to reconstitute the picture, what can be more cruel and, it may be added, more useless than to do so? In every disfigured corpse, in every armless and legless trunk, those whose loved ones have died a glorious death would see a terrible vision of the 'may have been.' The only time I ever attempted to give that touch of real horror to a picture was in a painting of mine, entitled 'Un Coup de Mitrailleuse,' in reality a reconstitution of what I once saw in a hollow lane—namely, a mass of soldiery, dismembered and blown to pieces by a shell."

"And as time goes on, do not your impressions of what then occurred become more or less blurred?"

"No, indeed; on the contrary, certain scenes and certain episodes tend to become clearer, especially those, I am glad to say, which reveal the soldier in a heroic and in a touching light. As was perhaps not unnatural, bitterness overcame every feeling during the first few months and years which



"SALUTING THE WOUNDED."

From the Picture by M. Detaille. [*By permission of Goupil & Co., Paris.*

From the Picture by "THE BATTERY TO THE FRONT!—1870." [*M. Detaille.*
By permission of Goupil & Co., Paris.

followed the war. At the close of the war, just before the Commune broke out, I went to Holland; but on my return, finding my country was still in the occupation of the Germans, I painted, as a result, two pictures, one of which was entitled 'The Conquerors.' Although it was sent to the Salon of 1872, the Government ordered it not to be shown."

"I suppose you are not one of those who deprecate war, and who would like to see the great international struggles of the world fade away in universal peace?"

"It is impossible for one who has fought in a war not to realize that warfare brings out, as it were, the heroism of which the world is always in need. I could tell you many incidents of simple, sober, bourgeois being transformed by their country's danger into true heroes. I would even go so far as to say that defeat has its noble attributes. How many men I have seen go to their death animated by the spirit which inspired the splendid verses of Paul Déroulède, whom it has now become the fashion to laugh at and revile:—

En avant! Tant pis
pour qui tombe;
La mort n'est rien.
Vive la tombe!
Quand le pays en sort
vivant!
En avant!"

"I suppose I need hardly ask you if you approve of conscription?"

"On the whole, I do not," was the unexpected answer. "Rightly or wrongly, I have always held the theory that a commander finds it far more easy to manage a small army of highly-trained troops than a huge, unwieldy mass of men who, whatever be their willingness and individual valour, have not received the kind of training which goes to make a good soldier. I feel this to be particularly the case in these days of modern warfare, when every month we hear of some modification not only in the type of arm actually used, but in the more complicated pieces of artillery."

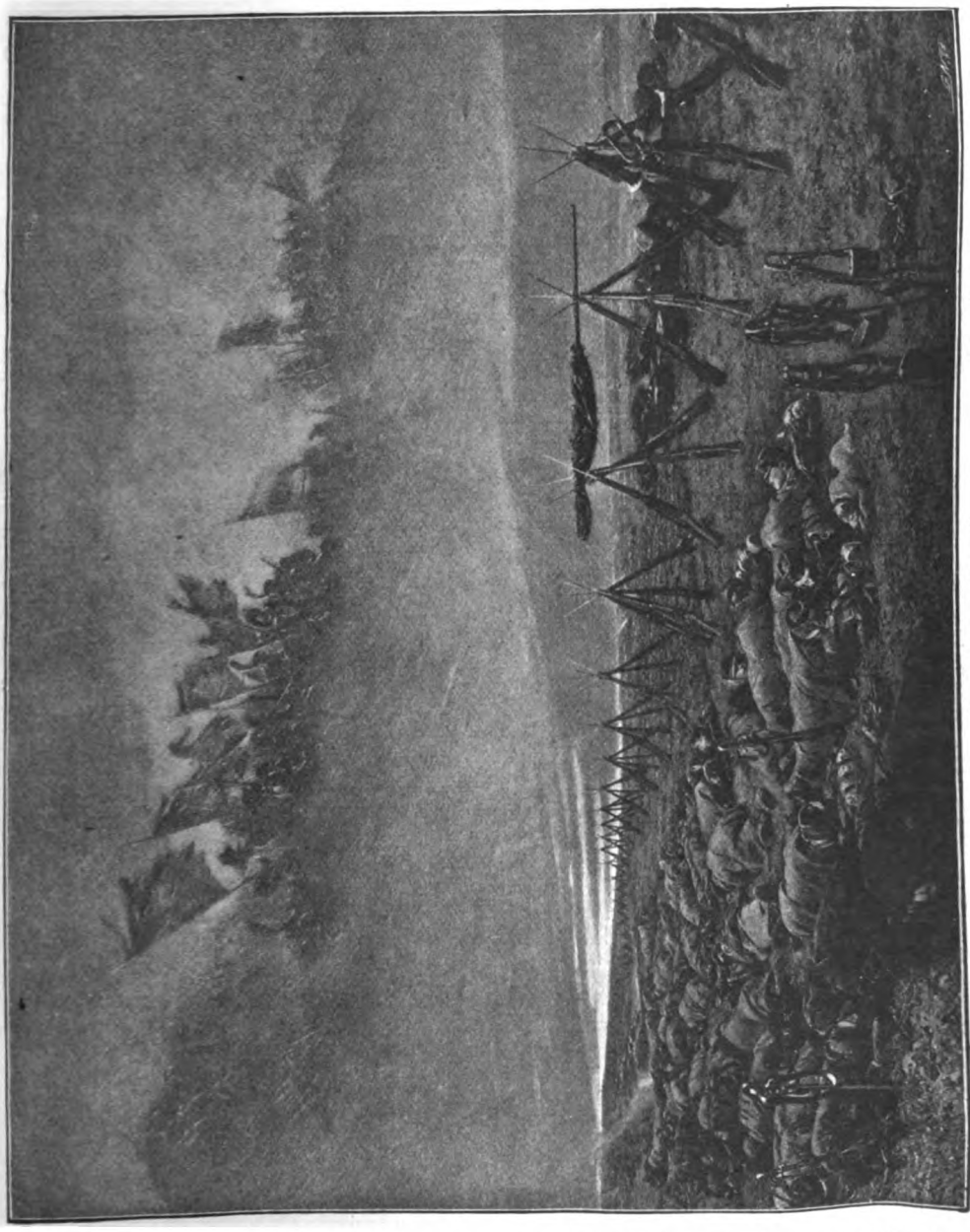
"Do you believe that the motor-car and the cycle will play any very great part in the wars of the twentieth century?"

"Here again I do not much believe in the triumph of machines over humanity. Even nowadays what tells in modern warfare is, first, leadership; and, secondly, right down physical courage; and my imagination cannot conceive a battle in which these two agencies would not each play a preponderant part in deciding the fortunes of the day."

"I suppose you have not seen actual warfare since the Franco-Prussian War?"

"Well, in 1881 I obtained leave from our Minister of War to join a brigade in the Tunis campaign. Of course this little expedition was extremely interesting to me as being quite unlike anything to which I was already accustomed, and from an artistic point of view there could not be a more picturesque and striking background than North Africa, while the Arabs make, as you are probably aware, ideal soldiery."

"Are you familiar with the appearance and the personnel of the English and of the other great non-French armies?"

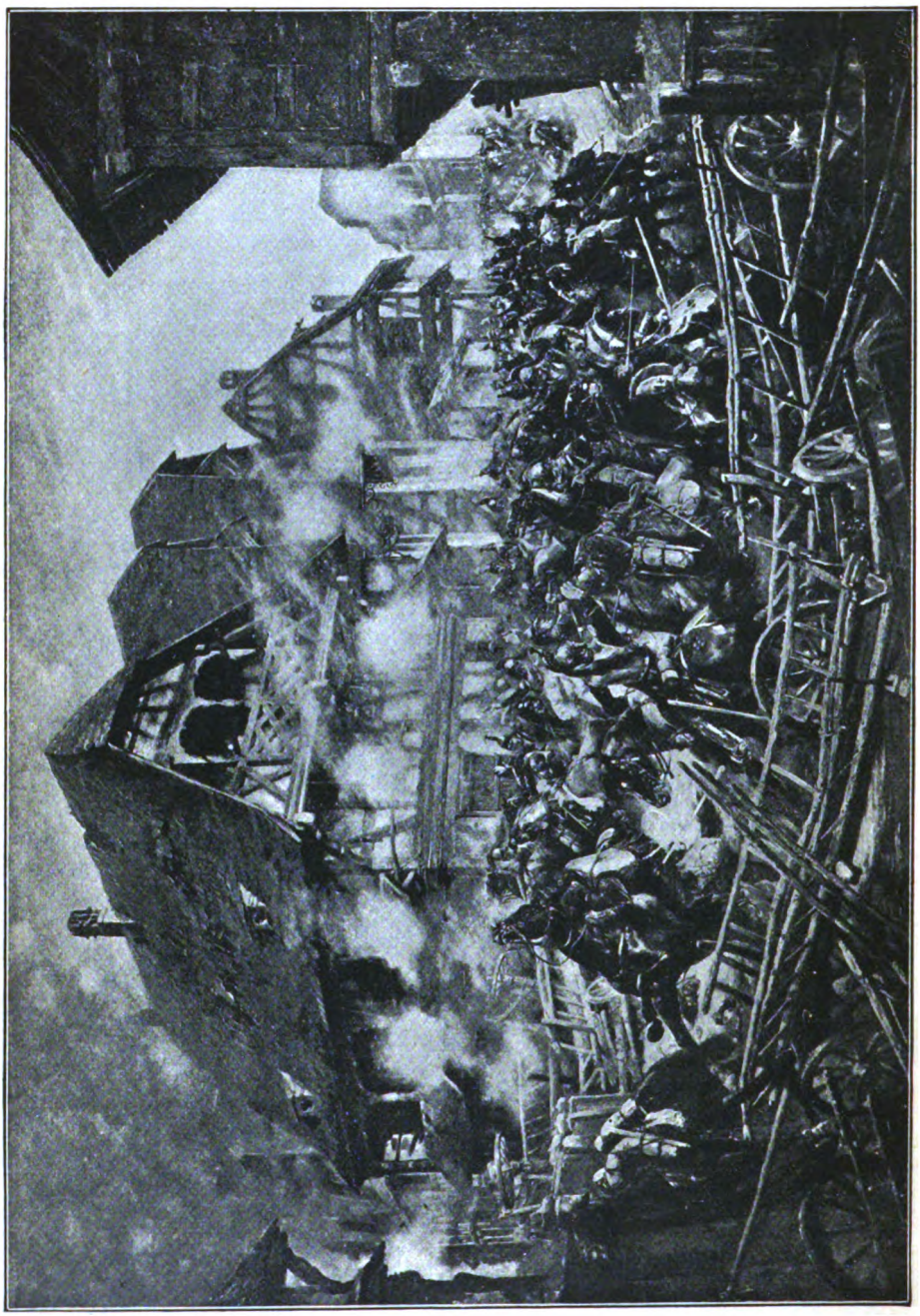


[*By permission of Goupil & Co., Paris.*

"THE SOLDIER'S DREAM."

From the Picture by M. Detaille.]

"Yes, I have made a special study of what may be grouped together as the modern military world. My first visit to England," he added, smiling, "was when I was only five years of age, and I spoilt our passport by draw-



"CHARGE OF THE 9TH CUIRASSIERS AT MORSBRÖNN." [By permission of Goupil & Co., Paris.

From the Picture by M. Detaille.]

ing little pictures all over it. But since that far-off day I have been constantly across the Channel, and I think I can claim to have made a very special study of the British Army. This was made the more easy owing to the great courtesy and kindness both of the Prince of Wales and of the Duke of Connaught."

"I believe you have done a portrait of the two Royal brothers, which is now in the Queen's possession?"

"Yes; and this, I may say, was the first large portrait work of the kind I ever attempted. This picture was given by the Prince of Wales to the Queen as a Jubilee gift, and I found the painting of it very

interesting. I often regret that we do not see more equestrian portraits nowadays; to my thinking, a man never looks to more advantage than when on horseback."

"I suppose it would be invidious to ask you what you think of our leading military painters?"

"On the contrary, I am keenly interested in the really splendid black and white work which has been done during the last few years by those who so modestly style themselves war specials and war sketchers; but still I must admit that I was surprised, when I first went to England, to find how comparatively few military painters there were, and especially to discover that the great military artist of that day was a lady; I refer, of course, to the brilliant painter of 'The Roll Call'; then again, I greatly admire the fine work of Caton Woodville. I cannot help thinking that if ever British artists had a chance of seeing war at home, there would be founded in England a wonderful school of military painting. I cannot fancy any army more interesting from the painter's point of view than the British Army. Of course, one thing which strikes the foreigner pleasantly in London is the London soldiery. Tommy Atkins seems to be ubiquitous, and it is wonderful to think that the smart, well-turned-out young fellow, who is the cynosure of all eyes, was perhaps only yesterday the idle good-for-nothing, who seemed determined to settle down to no honest work, that most miserable of God's creatures.

"As to whether I have ever done any large paintings of British military life, I can claim to have exhibited three—one, 'The Scots Guards Returning from Drill'; another, 'The Tower of London,' in which I made use of the highly picturesque and beautiful uniform of the Yeomen of the Guard; and, thirdly, a somewhat realistic presentment of a recruiting station near the Houses of Parliament. Both when following the manœuvres at Aldershot and when in London, I sketched incessantly at the various picturesque types of the British Army. By the courtesy of the officer commanding I was allowed to make a number of special studies of the Horse Guards' equipment, the uniform, breastplate, harness, knapsack, and so on."

"And have you made an equally exhaustive study of any other European army?"

"Yes, of that of Russia; for, in 1884, Alexander III. invited me to the camp of Krasnoe Selo, and for an unforgettable six weeks I accompanied my Imperial host everywhere, receiving not only from him, but from all his entourage, innumerable courtesies and kindnesses. I worked exceedingly hard, and fortunately for me there were no great ceremonies to distract my attention, for we all lived, from the Emperor to the youngest drummer-boy, the life of soldiers. Of course the Russian army is very distinctive; thus, in Russia alone the peasant's costume as now worn may be said to have been the prototype of the modern Russian soldier's uniform, and each regiment is only distinguished by what appear to the non-Russian eye quite insignificant distinctions.

"Another curious peculiarity of the Russian army is that there—as must have been the case in the great mediæval armies—is to be found every kind of mount. This, of course, makes it peculiarly interesting from an artistic point of view."

"I suppose, M. Detaille, that you have made a very special study of the Napoleonic legions?"

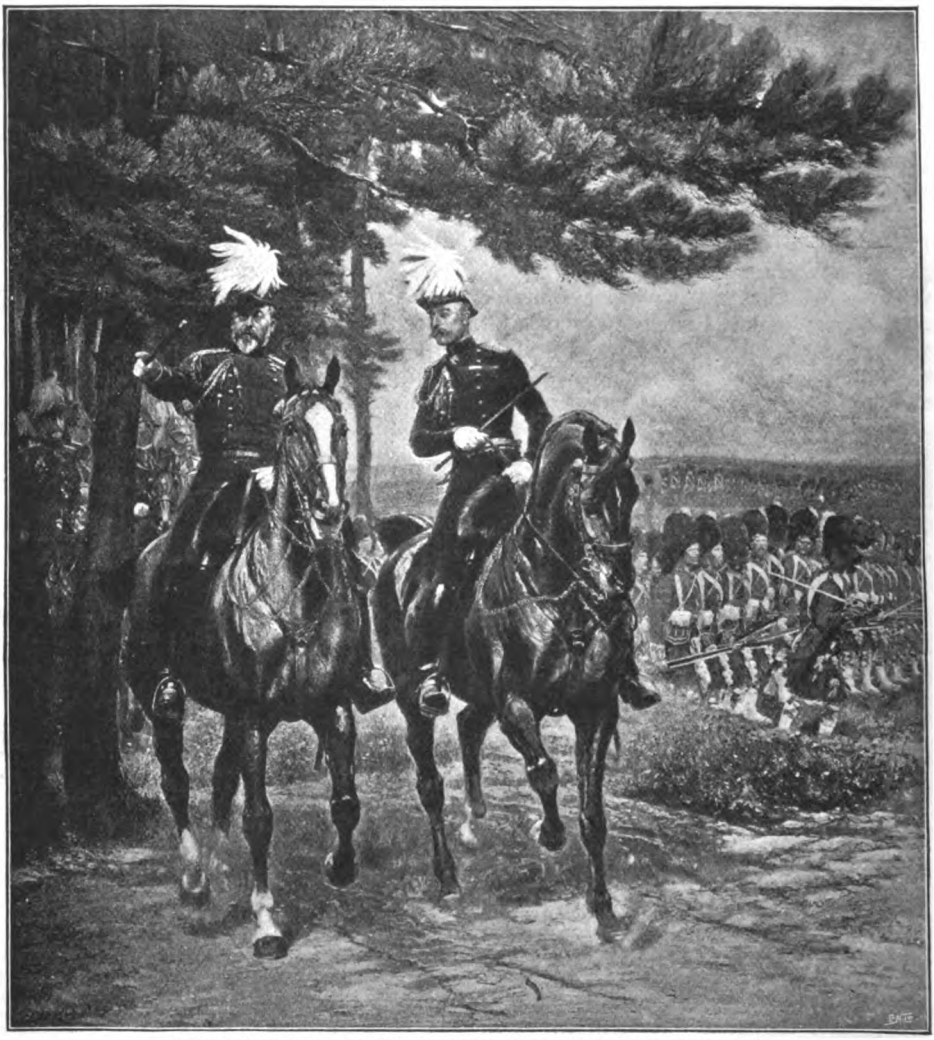
"Yes, or perhaps it would be truer to say that I have made a special study of the French army throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and, of course, during these two hundred years the Napoleonic epoch stands out supreme."

"Your historical work must involve an immense amount of study and research," I observed, looking round the great studio, certain portions of which might well be sections of a military museum, for M. Detaille is constantly adding to his collection of uniforms and arms.

"Yes, an historical painter must be prepared to go through a good deal of drudgery which, though interesting in itself, does not directly bear on his art. When I was preparing for my large picture, 'The Surrender of the Heroic Huningue Garrison,' I not only went to the place itself, but I took endless pains to discover a plan and sketches of the old fortified town. In order to achieve this I put myself in communication with the principal residents of Huningue, many of whom kindly assisted me by looking among their family papers. Again, it was only by diligent seeking that I discovered the, in most cases, private family portraits of the principal defenders of the heroic city; and I had to go to Vienna for the portraits of the Austrian generals who acted in so chivalrous a manner to their defeated enemy."

"Then even during your holidays you never lose sight of your work?"

"Yes, in spite of the good old English proverb, 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy,' I consider that any artist, and



"THE PRINCE OF WALES AND THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT AT ALDERSHOT."
From the Picture by M. Detaille. By permission of Goupil & Co., Paris. Copyright, 1897, by Jean Boussod, Manzi, Joyant & Co., Paris.

especially I would say any young artist, must give himself up entirely to his art. People thoroughly realize this fact in the case of a man who has charge of a large financial business; how much more should it be true when such an art as painting is in question? The artist must never be content with '*l'à peu près*,' that is to say, 'the pretty well.' What is worth doing at all is worth doing well."

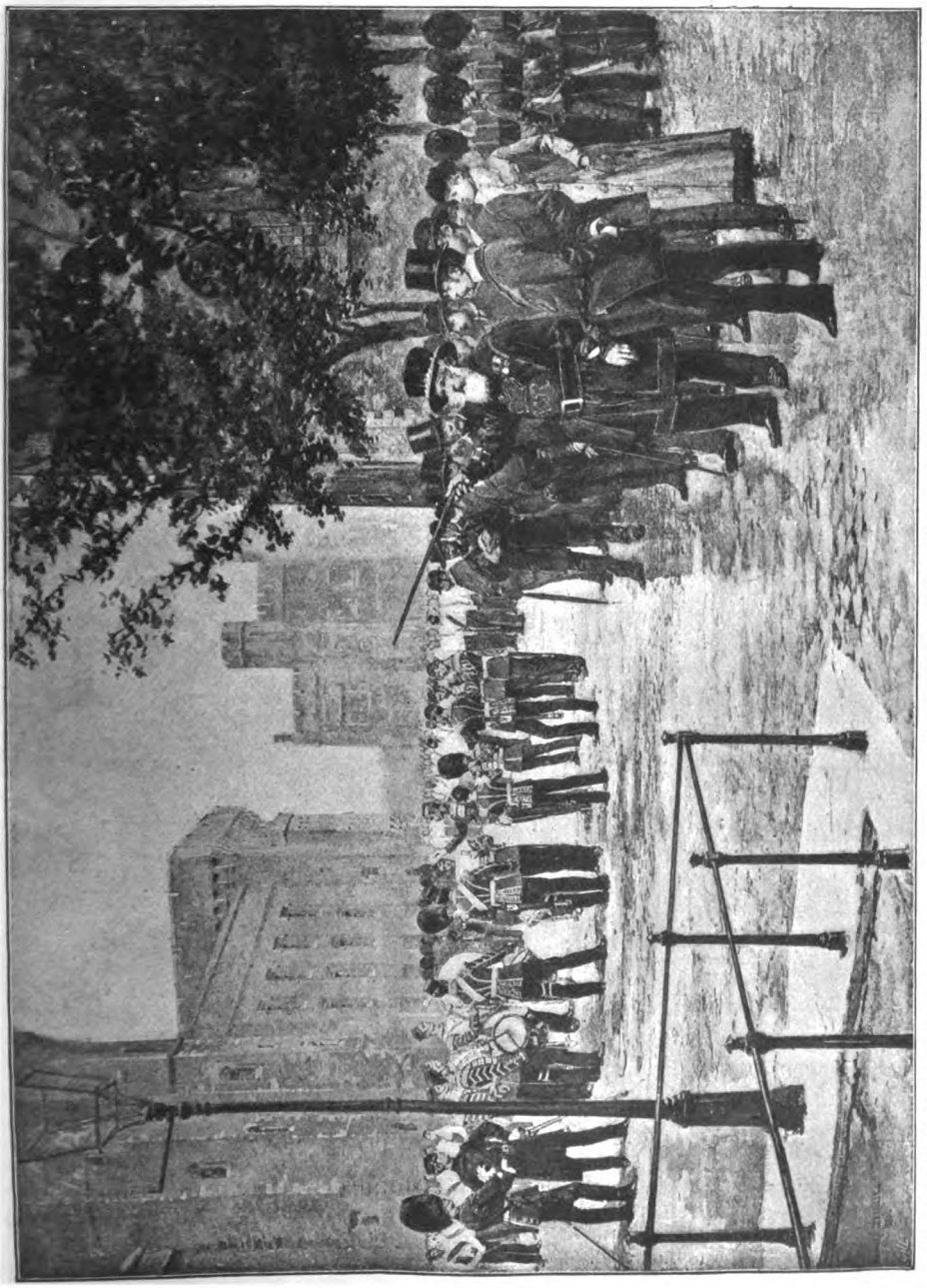
"Then I suppose each of your paintings means an extraordinary amount of preparation in the way of preliminary sketches?"

"Yes, and no. I never begin a piece of work until I have mentally completed every detail. In this I suppose my method is not unlike that pursued by the musician who composes without the assistance of an instrument. Some of my pictures have been thought out very rapidly; others have taken years before I saw them, as it were, quite clearly focused in my mind. I rarely modify my original conception. Unlike many of my comrades, whose pictures, however, I must confess, do not seem to suffer from their lack of method and careless manner of working, I leave nothing to chance, and whenever it be possible, I paint directly from Nature. I find it far easier to paint in the country than in town. I do not believe in the system of making an immense number of sketches and studies, for personally I should lose all my *en train* if my work consisted of a series of more or less elaborate copies from

a preliminary sketch. When working at a battlefield, whether my painting be an easel picture or a panorama, I settle myself in where the action actually took place, and so at least insure the accuracy of the landscape."

"And what first made you turn your attention to panorama?"

"I have always delighted in making experiments, and when my friend, Alphonse de Neuville, and myself were asked to undertake a panorama of the Battle of Champigny, we made up our minds that it would be an interesting experiment. And the result more than fulfilled our expectations, for it taught me, at least, to paint on a much larger scale than I had ever done before; but I need hardly tell you that it involved a very



[*By permission of Goupil & Co., Paris.*

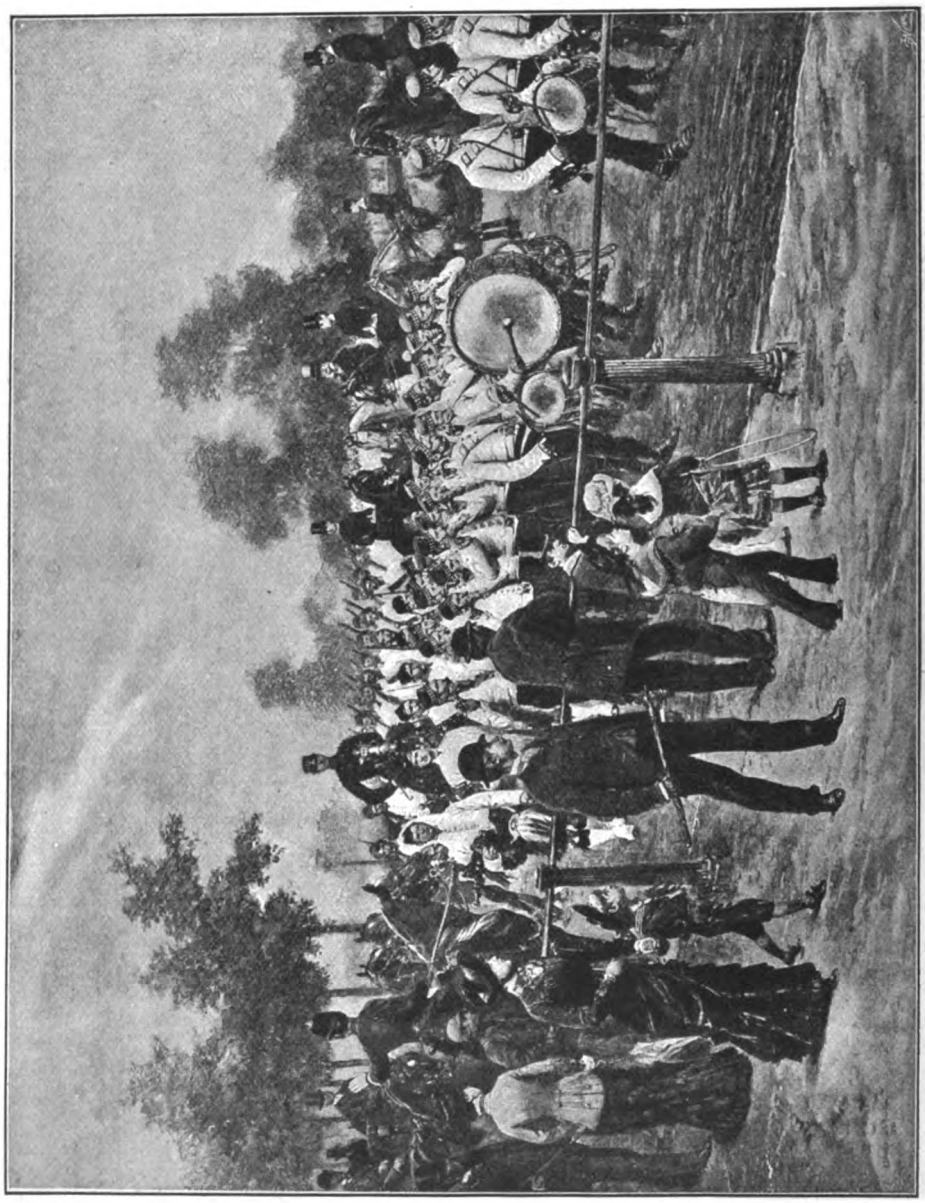
"THE TOWER OF LONDON."

From the Picture by M. Detaille.]

great deal of heavy work, the more so that we did every inch of the painting ourselves with the exception of certain portions of the sky."

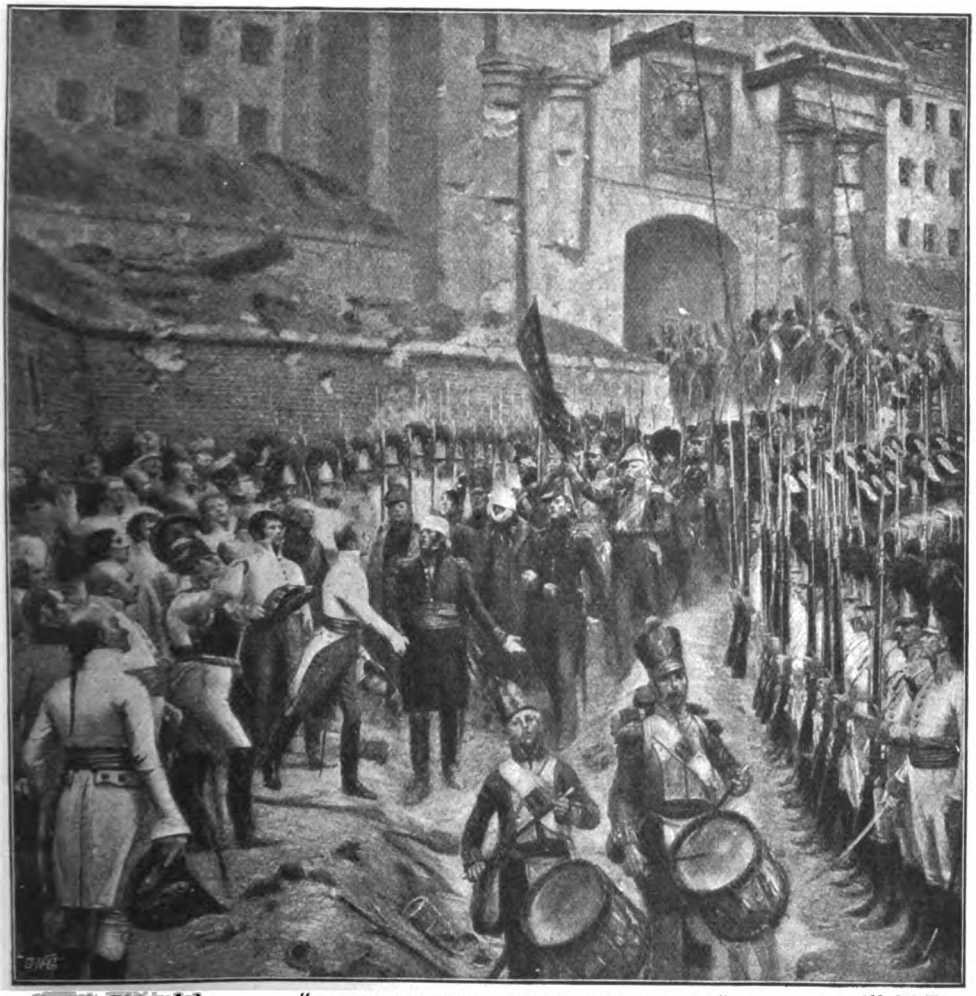
Those who had the good fortune of seeing the panorama in question will never forget this wonderful reconstitution of a battlefield. The moment chosen by the two artists was three o'clock in the afternoon of the second day of the battle (December 2nd, 1870). So astonishing and remarkable was the result, that staff officers belonging to every nation in the world came to Paris on purpose to see it. And equally successful was another panorama of M. Detaille's, namely, the Battle of Rezonville.

"In this panorama I tried," he observed, "to show a battlefield as it really is, and I chose the hour of 7.30 p.m., for I considered it would then be more easy to express the strange, silent twilight that falls on such a scene—for when the fighting is



"THE SCOTS GUARDS RETURNING FROM DRILL. [By permission of Goupil & Co., Paris.

From the Picture by M. Detaille.]



From the Picture by] "SURRENDER OF THE GARRISON OF HUNINGUE—1815." [*M. Detaille.*

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hardest, that is between the thunder of the artillery and the sharp rifle detonations, descends a silence which may be felt. Personally I preferred the panorama of Rezonville to that of Champigny, for I consider that in it a far more real impression of what actually took place was conveyed to the spectator."

"I suppose you have not had much occasion to turn your attention to the humorous side of army life?"

"I admit I have more or less left that side of military life to my brilliant young friend, Caran d'Ache, but of course I have done innumerable sketches showing the lighter side of military life. Laughter and tears have always been closely connected, and when I look back on the Franco-Prussian War, I remember many incidents which may be regarded from either point of view. It pains me to see any army, French or foreign, caricatured in a disagreeable and insolent manner; on the other hand, it must be admitted that both Tommy Atkins and our own Piou-Piou often lend themselves—in times of peace, be it said—to the exercise of a little gentle ridicule."

The Brass Bottle.

By F. Anstey.

Author of "Vice-Versâ," etc., etc.

CHAPTER IV.

AT LARGE.

"SO *you* were inside that bottle, were you?" said Horace, blandly. "How singular!" He began to realize that he had to deal with an Oriental lunatic, and must humour him to some extent. Fortunately he did not seem at all dangerous, though undeniably eccentric-looking. His hair fell in disorderly profusion from under his high turban about his cheeks, which were of a uniform pale rhubarb tint; his grey beard streamed out in three thin strands, and his long, narrow eyes, opal in hue, and set rather wide apart and at a slight angle, had a curious expression, part slyness and part childlike simplicity.

"Dost thou doubt that I speak truth? I tell thee that I have been confined in that accursed vessel for countless centuries—how long, I know not, for it is beyond calculation."

"I should hardly have thought from your appearance, sir, that you had been so many years in bottle as all that," said Horace, politely, "but it's certainly time you had a change. May I, if it isn't indiscreet, ask how you came into such a very uncomfortable position? But probably you have forgotten by this time."

"Forgotten!" said the other, with a sombre red glow in his opal eyes. "Wisely was it written: 'Let him that desireth oblivion confer benefits—but the memory of an injury endureth for ever.' *I* forget neither benefits nor injuries."

"An old gentleman with a grievance," thought Ventimore. "And mad into the bargain. Nice person to have staying in the same house with one!"

"Know, O best of mankind," continued the stranger, "that he who now addresses thee is Fakrash-el-Aamash, one of the Green Jinn. And I dwelt in the Palace of the Mountain of the Clouds above the City of Babel in the Garden of Irem, which thou doubtless knowest by repute?"

"I fancy I *have* heard of it," said Horace, as if it were an address in the Court Directory. "Delightful neighbourhood."

"I had a kinswoman, Bedeea-el-Jemal, who possessed incom-

"I FORGET NEITHER BENEFITS NOR INJURIES."

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parable beauty and manifold accomplishments. And seeing that, though a Jinneeyeh, she was of the believing Jinn, I dispatched messengers to Suleyman the Great, the son of Daood, offering him her hand in marriage. But a certain Jarjarees, the son of Rejmoos, the son of Iblees—may he be for ever accursed! — looked with favour upon the maiden, and, going secretly unto Suleyman, persuaded him that I was preparing a crafty snare for the King's undoing."

"And, of course, *you* never thought of such a thing?" said Ventimore.

"By a venomous tongue the fairest motives may be rendered foul," was the somewhat evasive reply. "Thus it came to pass that Suleyman—on whom be peace!—listened unto the voice of Jarjarees and refused to receive the maiden. Moreover, he commanded that I should be seized and imprisoned in a bottle of brass and cast into the Sea of El-Karkar, there to abide the Day of Doom."

"Too bad—really too bad!" murmured Horace, in a tone that he hoped was sufficiently sympathetic.

"But now, by thy means, O thou of noble ancestors and gentle disposition, my deliverance hath been accomplished; and if I were to serve thee for a thousand years, regarding nothing else, even thus could I not requite thee, and my so doing would be a small thing according to thy deserts!"

"Pray don't mention it," said Horace; "only too pleased if I've been of any use to you."

"In the sky it is written upon the pages of the air: 'He who doth kind actions shall experience the like.' Am I not an Efreet of the Jinn? Demand, therefore, and thou shalt receive."

"Poor old chap!" thought Horace, "he's very cracked indeed. He'll be wanting to give me a present of some sort soon—and of course I can't have that . . . . My dear Mr. Fakrash," he said, aloud, "I've done nothing—nothing at all—and if I had, I couldn't possibly accept any reward for it."

"What are thy names, and what calling dost thou follow?"

"I ought to have introduced myself before—let me give you my card," and Ventimore gave him one, which the other took and placed in his girdle. "That's my business address. I'm an architect, if you know what that is—a man who builds houses and churches—mosques, you know—in fact, anything, when he can get it to build."

"A useful calling indeed—and one to be rewarded with fine gold."

"In my case," Horace confessed, "the reward has been too fine to be perceived. In other words, I've never *been* rewarded, because I've never yet had the luck to get a client."

"And what is this client of whom thou speakest?"

"Oh, well, some well-to-do merchant who wants a house built for him and doesn't care how much he spends on it. There must be lots of them about—but they never seem to come in *my* direction."

"Grant me a period of delay, and, if it be possible, I will procure thee such a client."

Horace could not help thinking that any recommendation from such a quarter would hardly carry much weight; but, as the poor old man evidently imagined himself under an obligation, which he was anxious to discharge, it would have been unkind to throw cold water on his good intentions.

"My dear sir," he said, lightly, "if you *should* come across that particular type of client, and can contrive to impress him with the belief that I'm just the architect he's looking out for—which, between ourselves, I am, though nobody's discovered it yet—if you can get him to come to me, you will do me the very greatest service I could ever hope for. But don't give yourself any trouble over it."

"It will be one of the easiest things that can be," said his visitor, "that is" (and here a shade of rather pathetic doubt crossed his face) "provided that anything of my former power yet remains unto me."

"Well, never mind, sir," said Horace; "if you can't, I shall take the will for the deed."

"First of all, it will be prudent to learn where Suleyman is, that I may humble myself before him and make my peace."

"Yes," said Horace, gently, "I would. I should make a point of that, sir. Not *now*, you know. He might be in bed. To-morrow morning."

"This is a strange place that I am in, and I know not yet in what direction I should seek him. But till I have found him, and justified myself in his sight, and had my revenge upon Jarjarees, mine enemy, I shall know no rest."

"Well, but go to bed now, like a sensible old chap," said Horace, soothingly, anxious to prevent this poor, demented Asiatic from falling into the hands of the police. "Plenty of time to go and call on Suleyman to-morrow."

"I will search for him, even unto the uttermost ends of the earth!"

"That's right—you're sure to find him in one of them. Only, don't you see, it's no use starting to-night—the last trains have gone long ago." As he spoke, the night wind bore across the square the sound of Big Ben striking the quarters in Westminster Clock Tower, and then, after a pause, the solemn boom that announced the first of the small hours. "To-morrow," thought Ventimore, "I'll speak to Mrs. Rapkin, and get her to send for a doctor and have him put under proper care—the poor old boy really isn't fit to go about alone!"

"I will start now—at once," insisted the stranger, "for there is no time to be lost."

"Oh, come!" said Horace, "after so many thousand years, a few hours more or less won't make any serious difference. And you *can't* go out now—they've shut up the house. Do let me take you upstairs to your room, sir?"

"Not so, for I must leave thee for a season, O young man of kind conduct. But may thy days be fortunate, and thy gate never cease to be repaired, and the nose of him that envieth thee be rubbed in the dust, for love for thee hath entered into my heart, and if it be permitted unto me, I will cover thee with the veils of my protection!"

As he finished this harangue the speaker seemed, to Ventimore's speechless amazement, to slip through the wall behind him. At all events, he had left the room somehow—and Horace found himself alone.

He rubbed the back of his head, which began to be painful. "He can't really have vanished through the wall," he said to himself. "That's too absurd. The fact is, I'm over-excited this evening—and no wonder, after all that's happened. The best thing I can do is to go to bed at once!"

Which he accordingly proceeded to do.

CHAPTER V.

CARTE BLANCHE.

When Ventimore woke next morning his headache had gone, and with it the recollection of everything but the wondrous and delightful fact that Sylvia loved him and had promised to be his some day. Her mother, too, was on his side; why should he despair of anything after that? There was the Professor, to be sure—but even he might be brought to consent to an engagement, especially if it turned out that the brass bottle . . . and here Horace began to recall an extraordinary dream in connection with that rather speculative purchase of his. He had dreamed that he had forced the bottle open, and that it proved to contain, not manuscripts, but an elderly Jinnee who alleged that he had been imprisoned there by the order of King Solomon!

What, he wondered, could have put so grotesque a fancy into his head, and then he smiled as he traced it to Sylvia's playful suggestion that the bottle might contain a "genie," as did the famous jar in the "Arabian Nights," and to her father's pedantic correction of the word to "Jinnee." Upon that slight foundation his sleeping brain had built up all that elaborate fabric—a scene so vivid and a story so circumstantial and plausible that, in spite of its extravagance, he could hardly even now persuade himself that it was entirely imaginary. The psychology of dreams is a subject which has a fascinating mystery, even for the least serious student.

As he entered the sitting-room, where his breakfast awaited him, he looked round, half expecting to find the bottle lying with its lid off in the corner, as he had last seen it in his dream.

Of course, it was not there, and he felt an odd relief. The auction-room people had not delivered it yet, and so much the better, for he had still to ascertain if it had anything inside it; and who knew that it might not contain something more to his advantage than a maundering old Jinnee with a grievance several thousands of years old?

Breakfast over, he rang for his landlady, who presently appeared. Mrs. Rapkin was a superior type of her much-abused class. She was scrupulously clean and neat in her person; her sandy hair was so smooth and tightly knotted that it gave her head the colour and shape of a Barcelona nut; she had sharp, beady eyes, nostrils that seemed to smell battle afar off, a wide, thin mouth that apparently closed with a snap, and a dry, whity-brown complexion suggestive of bran.

But, if somewhat grim of aspect, she was a good soul and devoted to Horace, in whom she took almost a maternal interest, while regretting that he was not what she called "serous-minded enough" to get on in the world. Rapkin had wooed and married her when they were both in service, and he still took occasional jobs as an outdoor butler, though Horace suspected that his more staple form of industry was the consumption of gin-and-water and remarkably full-flavoured cigars in the basement parlour.

"Shall you be dining in this evening, sir?" inquired Mrs. Rapkin.

MR. RAPKIN.

"I don't know. Don't get anything in for me; I shall most probably dine at the club," said Horace; and Mrs. Rapkin, who had a confirmed belief that all clubs were hotbeds of vice and extravagance, sniffed disapproval. "By the way," he added, "if a kind of brass pot is sent here, it's all right. I bought it at a sale yesterday. Be careful how you handle it—it's rather old."

"There *was* a vawse come late last night, sir; I don't know if it's that, it's old-fashioned enough."

"Then will you bring it up at once, please? I want to see it."

Mrs. Rapkin retired, to re-appear presently with the brass bottle. "I thought you'd have noticed it when you come in last night, sir," she explained, "for I stood it in the corner, and when I see it this morning it was layin' o' one side and looking that dirty and disrespectable I took it down to give it a good clean, which it wanted it."

It certainly looked rather the better for it, and the marks or scratches on the cap were more distinguishable, but Horace was somewhat disconcerted to find that part of his dream was true—the bottle had been there.

"I hope I've done nothing wrong," said Mrs. Rapkin, observing his expression; "I only used a little warm ale to it, which is a capital thing for brass-work, and gave it a scrub with 'Vitrolia' soap — but it would take more than that to get all the muck off of it."

"It is all right, so long as you didn't try to get the top off," said Horace.

"Why, the top *was* off it, sir. I thought you'd done it with the 'ammer and chisel when you got 'ome," said his landlady, staring. "I found them 'ere on the carpet."

Horace started. Then *that* part was true, too! "Oh, ah," he said, "I believe I did. I'd forgotten. That reminds me. Haven't you let the room above to—to an Oriental gentleman—a native, you know—wears a green turban?"

"That I most certainly 'ave *not*, Mr. Ventimore," said Mrs. Rapkin, with emphasis, "nor wouldn't. Not if his turbin was all the colours of the rainbow—for I don't 'old with such. Why, there was Rapkin's own sister-in-law let her parlour floor to a Horiental—a Parsee *he* was, or *one* o' them Hafrican tribes—and reason she 'ad to repent of it, for all his gold spectacles! Whatever made you fancy I should let to a blackamoor?"

"Oh, I thought I saw somebody about—er—answering that description, and I wondered if——"

"Never in *this* 'ouse, sir. Mrs. Steggars, next door but one, might let to such, for all I can say to the contrary, not being what you might call particular, and her rooms

"A LITTLE WARM ALE."

more suitable to savage notions—but I've enough on *my* hands, Mr. Ventimore, attending to you—not keeping a girl to do the waiting, as why should I while I'm well able to do it better myself?"

As soon as she relieved him of her presence he examined the bottle: there was nothing whatever inside it, which disposed of all the hopes he had entertained from that quarter.

It was not difficult to account for the visionary Oriental as an hallucination probably inspired by the heavy fumes (for he now believed in the fumes) which had doubtless resulted from the rapid decomposition of some long-buried spices or similar substances suddenly exposed to the air.

If any further explanation were needed, the accidental blow to the back of his head, together with the latent suggestion from the "Arabian Nights," would amply provide it.

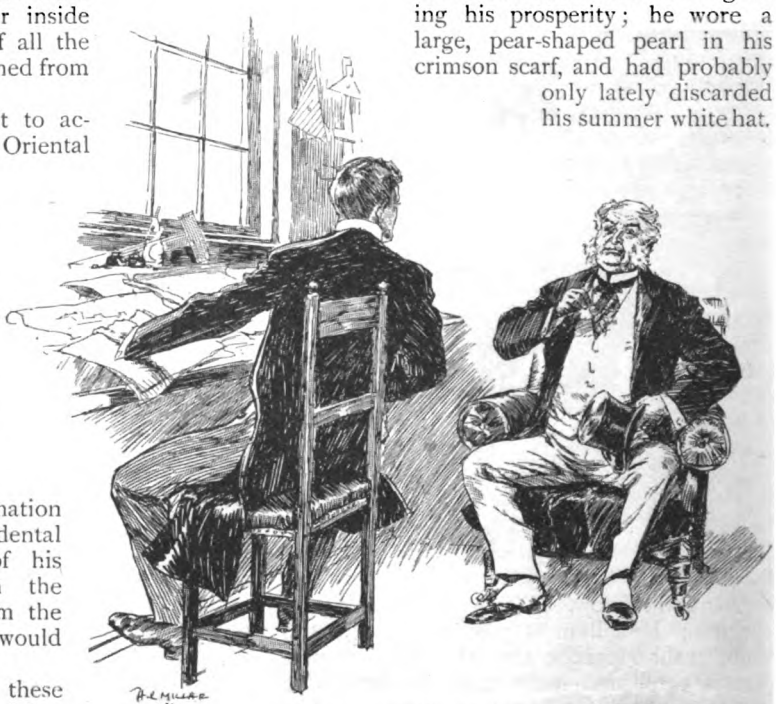
So, having settled these points to his entire satisfaction, he went to his office in Great Cloister Street, which he now had entirely to himself, and was soon engaged in drafting the specification for Beevor on which he had been working when so fortunately interrupted the day before by the Professor.

The work was more or less mechanical, and could bring him no credit and little thanks, but Horace had the happy faculty of doing thoroughly whatever he undertook, and as he sat there by his wide-open window, he soon became entirely oblivious of all but the task before him.

So much so that, even when the light became obscured for a moment, as if by some large and opaque body in passing, he did not look up immediately, and, when he did, was surprised to find the only arm-chair occupied by a portly person, who seemed to be trying to recover his breath.

"I beg your pardon," said Ventimore; "I never heard you come in."

His visitor could only wave his hand in courteous deprecation, under which there seemed a suspicion of bewildered embarrassment. He was a rosy-gilled, spotlessly-clean, elderly gentleman, with white whiskers; his eyes, just then slightly protuberant, were shrewd, but genial; he had a wide, jolly mouth and a double chin. He was dressed like a man who is above disguising his prosperity; he wore a large, pear-shaped pearl in his crimson scarf, and had probably only lately discarded his summer white hat.



"'I BEG YOUR PARDON,' SAID VENTIMORE; 'I NEVER HEARD YOU COME IN.'"

"My dear sir," he began, in a rich, throaty voice, as soon as he could speak; "my dear sir, you must think this is a most unceremonious way of—ah!—dropping in on you—of invading your privacy."

"Not at all," said Horace, wondering whether he could possibly intend him to understand that he had come in by the window. "I'm afraid there was no one to show you in—my clerk is away just now."

"No matter, sir, no matter. I found my way up, as you perceive. The important, I may say the essential, fact is that I *am* here."

"Quite so," said Horace; "and may I ask what brought you?"

"What brought——" the stranger's eyes grew fishlike for the moment. "Allow me, I—I shall come to that—in good time. I am still a little—as you can see." He glanced round the room. "You are, I think, an architect, Mr. ah—Mr. um——?"

"Ventimore is my name," said Horace, "and I *am* an architect."

"Ventimore, to be sure!" he put his hand in his pocket and produced a card: "Yes, it's all quite correct. I see I have the name here. And an architect, Mr. Ventimore, so I—I am given to understand, of immense ability."

"I'm afraid I can't claim to be that," said Horace, "but I may call myself fairly competent."

"Competent? Why, of *course* you're competent. Do you suppose, sir, that I, a practical business man, should come to any one who was *not* competent?" he said, with exactly the air of a man trying to convince himself—against his own judgment—that he was acting with the utmost prudence.

"Am I to understand that someone has been good enough to recommend me to you?" inquired Horace.

"Certainly not, sir, certainly not. *I* need no recommendation but my own judgment. I—ah—have a tolerable acquaintance with all that is going on in the art world, and I have come to the conclusion, Mr.—eh—ah—Ventimore, I repeat, the deliberate and unassisted conclusion, that you are the one man living who can do what I want."

"Delighted to hear it," said Horace, genuinely gratified. "When did you see any of my designs?"

"Never mind, sir. I don't decide without very good grounds. It doesn't take me long to make up my mind, and when my mind is made up, I act, sir, I act. And, to come to the point, I have a small commission—unworthy, I am quite aware, of your—ah—distinguished talent—which I should like to put in your hands."

"Is *he* going to ask me to attend a sale for him?" thought Horace. "I'm hanged if I do."

"I'm rather busy at present," he said, dubiously, "as you may see. I'm not sure whether——"

"I'll put the matter in a nutshell, sir—in a nutshell. My name is Wackerbath, Samuel Wackerbath—tolerably well known, if I may say so, in City circles." Horace, of course, concealed the fact that his visitor's name and fame were unfamiliar to him. "I've lately bought a few acres on the Hampshire border, near the house I'm living in just now; and I've been thinking—as I was saying to a friend only just now, as we were crossing Westminster Bridge—I've been thinking of building myself a little place there, just a humble, unpretentious home, where I could run down for the week-end and entertain a friend or two in a quiet way, and perhaps live some part of the year. Hitherto I've rented places as I wanted 'em — old family seats and ancestral mansions and so forth: very nice in their way, but I want to feel under a roof of my own. I want to surround myself with the simple comforts, the—ah—unassuming elegance of an English country home. And you're the man—I feel more convinced of it with every word you say—you're the man to do the job in style—ah—to execute the work as it should be done."

Here was the long-wished-for client at last! And it was satisfactory to feel that he had arrived in the most ordinary and commonplace course, for no one could look at Mr. Samuel Wackerbath and believe for a moment that he was capable of floating through an upper window; he was not in the least that kind of person.

"I shall be happy to do my best," said Horace, with a calmness that surprised himself. "Could you give me some idea of the amount you are prepared to spend?"

"Well, I'm no Crœsus—though I won't say I'm a pauper precisely — and, as I remarked before, I prefer comfort to splendour. I don't think I should be justified in going beyond—well, say sixty thousand."

"Sixty thousand!" exclaimed Horace, who had expected about a tenth of that sum. "Oh, not *more* than sixty thousand? I see."

"I mean, on the house itself," explained Mr. Wackerbath; "there will be outbuildings, lodges, cottages, and so forth, and then some of the rooms I should want specially decorated. Altogether, before we are finished, it may work out at about a hundred thousand. I take it that, with such a margin, you could—ah—run me up something that in a modest way would take the shine out of—I mean to say eclipse—anything in the adjoining counties?"

"I certainly think," said Horace, "that for such a sum as that I can undertake that you shall have a home which will satisfy you." And he proceeded to put the usual questions as to site, soil, available building materials, the accommodation that would be required, and so on.

"You're young, sir," said Mr. Wackerbath at the end of the interview, "but I perceive you are up to all the tricks of the—I *should* say, versed in the *minutiæ* of your profession. You would like to run down and look at the ground, eh? Well, that's only reasonable, and my wife and daughters will want to have *their* say in the matter—no getting on without pleasing the ladies, hey? Now, let me see. To-morrow's Sunday. Why not come down

by the 8.45 a.m. to Lipsfield? I'll have a trap, or a brougham and pair, or something, waiting for you—take you over the ground myself, bring you back to lunch with us at Oriel Court, and talk the whole thing thoroughly over. Then we'll send you up to town in the evening, and you can start work the first thing on Monday. That suit you? Very well, then. We'll expect you to-morrow."

With this Mr. Wackerbath departed, leaving Horace, as may be imagined, absolutely overwhelmed by the suddenness and completeness of his good fortune. He was no longer one of the unemployed: he had work to do, and, better still, work that would interest him, give him all the scope and opportunity he could wish for. With a client who seemed tractable, and to whom money was clearly no object, he might carry out some of his most ambitious ideas.

Moreover, he would now be in a position to speak to Sylvia's father without fear of a repulse. His commission on £60,000 would be £3,000, and that on the decorations and other work at least as much again—probably more. In a year he could marry without imprudence; in two or three years he might be making a handsome income, for he felt confident that, with such a start, he would soon have as much work as he could undertake.

He was ashamed of himself for ever having lost heart. What were the last few years of weary waiting but probation and preparation for this splendid chance, which had come just when he really needed it, and in the most simple and natural manner?

He loyally completed the work he had promised to do for Beevor, who would have to dispense with his assistance in future, and then he felt too excited and restless to stay in the office, and, after lunching at his club as usual, he promised himself the pleasure of going to Cottesmore Gardens and telling Sylvia his good news.

It was still early, and he walked the whole way, as some vent for his high spirits, enjoying everything with a new zest—the dappled grey and salmon sky before him, the amber, russet, and yellow of the scanty foliage in Kensington Gardens, the pungent scent of fallen chestnuts and acorns and burning leaves, the blue-grey mist stealing between the distant tree-trunks, and then the cheery bustle and brilliancy of the High Street. Finally came the joy of finding Sylvia all alone, and witnessing her frank delight at what he had come to tell her, of feeling her hands on his shoulders, and holding her in his arms, as their lips met for the first time. If on that Saturday afternoon there was a happier man than Horace Ventimore, he would have done well to dissemble his felicity, for fear of incurring the jealousy of the high gods.

When Mrs. Futvoye returned, as she did only too soon, to find her daughter and Horace seated on the same sofa, she did not pretend to be gratified. "This is taking a most unfair advantage of what I was weak enough to say last night, Mr. Ventimore," she began. "I thought I could have trusted you!"

"I shouldn't have come so soon," he said, "if my position were what it was only yesterday. But it's changed since then, and I venture to hope that even the Professor won't object now to our being regularly engaged." And he told her of the sudden alteration in his prospects.

"Well," said Mrs. Futvoye, "you had better speak to my husband about it."

The Professor came in shortly afterwards, and Horace immediately requested a few minutes' conversation with him in the study, which was readily granted.

The study to which the Professor led the way was built out at the back of the house, and crowded with Oriental curios of every age and kind; the furniture had been made by Cairene cabinet-makers, and along the cornices of the book-cases were texts from the Koran, while every chair bore the Arabic for "Welcome" in a gilded firework on its leather back; the lamp was a perforated mosque lantern with long pendent glass tubes like hyacinth glasses; a mummy-case smiled from a corner with laboured *bonhomie*.

"Well," began the Professor, as soon as they were seated, "so there was something in the brass bottle after all, then? Let's have a look at it, whatever it is."

For the moment Horace had almost forgotten the bottle. "Oh!" he said, "I—I got it open; but there was nothing in it."

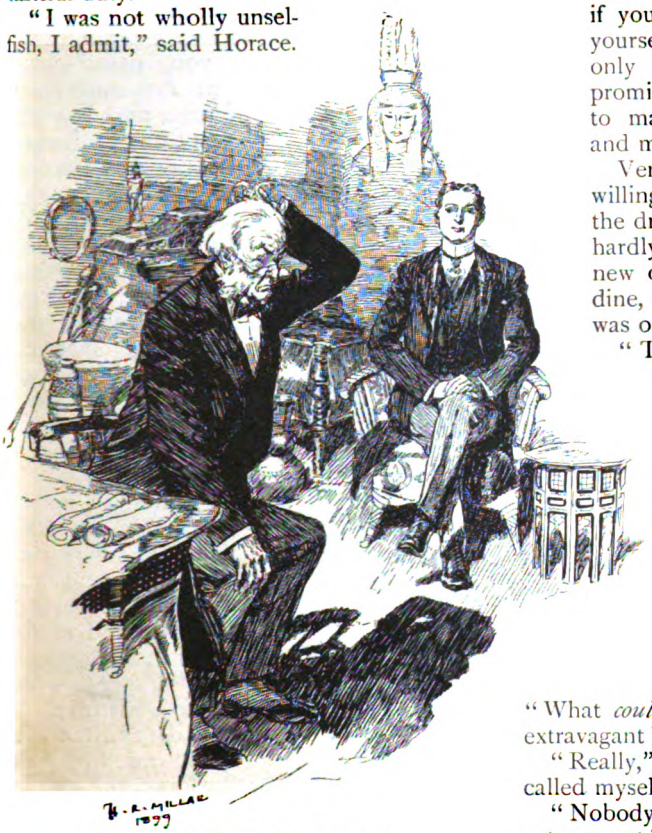
"Just as I anticipated, sir," said the Professor. "I told you there couldn't be anything in a bottle of that description; it was simply throwing money away to buy it."

"I daresay it was, but I wished to speak to you on a much more important matter," and Horace briefly explained his object.

"Dear me," said the Professor, rubbing up his hair irritably, "dear me! I'd no idea of this—no idea at all. I was under the impression that you volunteered to act as escort to my wife and daughter at St. Luc

purely out of good nature to relieve me from what—to a man of my habits in that extreme heat—would have been an arduous and distasteful duty."

"I was not wholly unselfish, I admit," said Horace.



"DEAR ME! I'D NO IDEA OF THIS."

"I fell in love with your daughter, sir, the first day I met her—only I felt I had no right, as a poor man with no prospects, to speak to her or you at that time."

"A very creditable feeling—but I've yet to learn why you should have overcome it."

So, for the third time, Ventimore told the story of the sudden turn in his fortunes.

"I know this Mr. Samuel Wackerbath by name," said the Professor; "one of the chief partners in the firm of Akers and Coverdale, the great estate agents—a most influential man, if you can only succeed in satisfying him."

"Oh, I don't feel any misgivings about that, sir," said Horace. "I mean to build him a house that will be beyond his wildest expectations, and you see that in a year I shall have earned several thousands, and I need not say that I will make any settlement you think proper when I marry——"

"When you are in possession of those thousands," remarked the Professor, drily, "it will be time enough to talk of marrying and making settlements. Meanwhile, if you and Sylvia choose to consider yourselves engaged, I won't object—only I must insist on having your promise that you won't persuade her to marry you without her mother's and my consent."

Ventimore gave this undertaking willingly enough, and they returned to the drawing-room. Mrs. Futvoye could hardly avoid asking Horace, in his new character of *fiancé*, to stay and dine, which it need not be said he was only too delighted to do.

"There is one thing, my dear—er—Horace," said the Professor, solemnly, after dinner, when the neat parlourmaid had left them at dessert, "one thing on which I think it my duty to caution you. If you are to justify the confidence we have shown in sanctioning your engagement to Sylvia, you must curb this propensity of yours to needless extravagance."

"Papa!" cried Sylvia. "What *could* have made you think Horace extravagant?"

"Really," said Horace, "I shouldn't have called myself particularly so."

"Nobody ever *does* call himself particularly extravagant," retorted the Professor; "but I observed at St. Luc that you habitually gave fifty centimes as a *pourboire* when twopence, or even a penny, would have been handsome. And no one with any regard for the value of money would have given a guinea for a worthless brass vessel on the bare chance that it might contain manuscripts, which (as anyone could have foreseen) it did not."

"But it's not a bad sort of bottle, sir," pleaded Horace. "If you remember, you said yourself the shape was unusual. Why shouldn't it be worth all the money, and more?"

"To a collector, perhaps," said the Professor, with his wonted amiability, "which you are not. No, I can only call it a senseless and reprehensible waste of money."

"Well, the truth is," said Horace, "I bought it with some idea that it might interest *you*."

"Then you were mistaken, sir. It does

not interest me. Why should I be interested in a metal jar which, for anything that appears to the contrary, may have been cast the other day at Birmingham?"

"But there *is* something," said Horace; "a seal or inscription of some sort engraved on the cap. Didn't I mention it?"

"You said nothing about an inscription before," replied the Professor, with rather more interest.

"I CAN ONLY CALL IT A SENSELESS WASTE OF MONEY."

"What is the character—Arabic? Persian? Kufic?"

"I really couldn't say—it's almost rubbed out—queer little triangular marks, something like birds' footprints."

"That sounds like Cuneiform," said the Professor, "which would seem to point to a Phœnician origin. And, as I am acquainted with no Oriental brass earlier than the ninth century of our era, I should regard your description as, *à priori*, distinctly unlikely. However, I should certainly like to have an opportunity of examining the bottle for myself some day."

"Whenever you please, Professor. When can you come?"

"Why, I'm so much occupied all day that I can't say for certain when I can get up to your office again."

"My own days will be fairly full now," said Horace; "and the thing's not at the office, but in my rooms at Vincent Square. Why shouldn't you all come and dine quietly there some evening next week, and then you could examine the inscription comfortably afterwards, you know, Professor, and find out what it really is? Do say you will." He was eager to have the privilege of entertaining Sylvia in his own rooms for the first time.

"No, no," said the Professor; "I see no reason why you should be troubled with the entire family. I may drop in alone some evening and take the luck of the pot, sir."

"Thank you, papa," put in Sylvia; "but *I* should like to come too, please, and hear what you think of Horace's bottle. And I'm dying to see his rooms. I believe they're fearfully luxurious."

"I trust," observed her father, "that they are far indeed from answering that description. If they did, I should consider it a most unsatisfactory indication of Horace's character."

"There's nothing magnificent about them, I assure you," said Horace. "Though it's true I've had them done up and all that sort of thing at my own expense — but quite simply. I couldn't afford to spend much on them. But do come and see them. I must have a little dinner, to celebrate my good fortune—it will be so jolly if you'll all three come."

"If we do come," stipulated the Professor, "it must be on the distinct understanding that you don't provide an elaborate banquet. Plain, simple, wholesome food, well cooked, such as we have had this evening, is all that is necessary. More would be ostentatious."

"My *dear* dad!" protested Sylvia, in distress at this somewhat dictatorial speech. "Surely you can leave all that to Horace!"

"Horace, my dear, understands that, in speaking as I did, I was simply treating him as a potential member of my family." Here Sylvia made a private little grimace. "No young man who contemplates marrying should allow himself to launch into extravagance on the strength of prospects which, for all he can tell," said the Professor, genially, "may prove fallacious. On the contrary, if his affection is sincere, he will incur as little expense as possible, put by every penny he can save, rather than subject the girl he

professes to love to the ordeal of a long engagement. In other words, the truest lover is the best economist."

"I quite understand, sir," said Horace, good-temperedly; "it would be foolish of me to attempt any ambitious form of entertainment—especially as my landlady, though an excellent plain cook, is not exactly a *cordon bleu*. So you can come to my modest board without misgivings."

Before he left, a provisional date for the dinner was fixed for an evening towards the end of the next week, and Horace walked home, treading on air rather than hard paving-stones, and "striking the stars with his uplifted head."

The next day he went down to Lipsfield and made the acquaintance of the whole

"THE WACKERBATH FAMILY WERE ALL ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE PROPOSED COUNTRY HOUSE."

Wackerbath family, who were all enthusiastic about the proposed country house. The site was a fine one, and would command extensive views. He came back to town the same evening, having spent a pleasant day and learnt enough of his client's requirements, and — what was even more important — those of his client's wife and daughters, to enable him to begin work upon the sketch plans the next morning.

He had not been long in his rooms at Vincent Square, and was still agreeably engaged in recalling the docility and ready appreciation with which the Wackerbaths had received his suggestions and rough sketches, their compliments and absolute confidence in his skill, when he had a shock which was as disagreeable as it was certainly unexpected.

For the wall before him parted like a film, and through it stepped, smiling benignantly, the green-robed figure of Fakrash-el-Aamash the Jinnee.

CHAPTER VI.

EMBARRAS DE RICHESSES.

VENTIMORE had so thoroughly convinced himself that the released Jinnee was purely a creature of his own imagination, that he rubbed his eyes with a start, hoping that they had deceived him.

"Stroke thy head, O merciful and meritorious one," said his visitor, "and recover thy faculties to receive good tidings. For it is indeed I—Fakrash-el-Aamash—whom thou beholdest."

"I—I'm delighted to see you," said Horace, as cordially as he could. "Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Nay, for hast thou not done me the greatest of all services by setting me free? To escape out of a bottle is pleasant. And to thee I owe my deliverance."

It was all true, then: he had really let an imprisoned Genius, or Jinnee, or whatever it was, out of that bottle! He knew he could not be dreaming now — he only wished he were. However, since it was done, his best course seemed to be to put a good face on it, and persuade this uncanny being some-

how to go away and leave him in peace for the future.

"Oh, that's all right, my dear sir," he said, "don't think any more about it. I—I rather understood you to say that you were starting on a journey in search of Solomon?"

"I have been, and returned. For I visited sundry cities in his dominions, hoping that by chance I might hear news of him, but I refrained from asking directly lest thereby I should engender suspicion, and so Suleyman should learn of my escape before I could obtain an audience of him and implore justice."

"Oh, I shouldn't think that was likely," said Horace. "If I were you, I should go straight back and go on travelling till I *did* find Suleyman."

"Well was it said: 'Pass not any door without knocking, lest haply that which thou seekest should be behind it.'"

"Exactly," said Horace. "Do each city thoroughly, house by house, and don't neglect the smallest clue. 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again!' as one of our own poets teaches."

"'Try, try, try again,'" echoed the Jinnee, with an admiration that was almost fatuous. 'Divinely gifted truly was he who composed such a verse!"

"He has a great reputation as a sage," said Horace, "and the maxim is considered one of his happiest efforts. Don't you think that, as the East is rather thickly populated, the less time you lose in following the poet's recommendation the better?"

"It may be as thou sayest. But know this, O my son, that wheresoever I may wander, I shall never cease to study how I may most fitly reward thee for thy kindness towards me. For nobly was it said: 'If I be possessed of wealth and be not liberal, may my head never be extended!'"

"My good sir," said Horace, "do please understand that if you were to offer me any reward for—for a very ordinary act of courtesy, I should be obliged to decline it."

"But did'st thou not say that thou wast sorely in need of a client?"

"That was so at the time," said Horace; "but since I last had the pleasure of seeing you, I have met with one who is all I could possibly wish for."

"I am indeed rejoiced to hear it," returned the Jinnee, "for thou showest me that I have succeeded in performing the first service which thou hast demanded of me."

Horace staggered under this severe blow to his pride; for the moment he could only gasp: "You—*you* sent him to me!"

"I, and no other," said the Jinnee, beaming with satisfaction; "for while, unseen of men, I was circling in air, resolved to attend to thy affair before beginning my search for Suleyman (on whom be peace!), it chanced that I overheard a human being of prosperous appearance say aloud upon a bridge that he desired to erect for himself a palace if he could but find an architect. So, perceiving thee afar off seated at an open casement, I immediately transported him to the place and delivered him into thy hands."

"But he knew my name—he had my card in his pocket," said Horace.

"I furnished him with the paper containing thy names and abode, lest he should be ignorant of them."

"Well, look here, Mr. Fakrash," said the unfortunate Horace, "I know you meant well—but *never* do a thing like that again! If my brother-architects came to know of it I should be accused of most unprofessional behaviour. I'd no idea you would take that way of introducing a client to me, or I should have stopped it at once!"

"It was an error," said Fakrash. "No matter. I will undo this affair, and devise some other and better means of serving thee."

Horace groaned. Undo it? How could it be undone now without some open scandal?

"No, no," he said, "for Heaven's sake, leave things alone—you'll only make them worse. Forgive me, my dear Mr. Fakrash, I'm afraid I must seem most ungrateful; but—but I was so taken by surprise. And, really, I am extremely obliged to you. For, though the means you took were—were a little irregular, you have done me a very great service."

"It is naught," said the Jinnee, "compared to those I hope to render so great a benefactor."

"But, indeed, you mustn't think of trying to do any more for me," urged Horace, who felt the absolute necessity of expelling any scheme of further benevolence from the Jinnee's head once and for all. "You have done enough. Why, thanks to you, I am engaged to build a palace that will keep me hard at work and happy for ever so long."

"Are human beings then so enamoured of hard labour?" asked Fakrash, in wonder. "It is not thus with the Jinn."

"I love my work for its own sake," said Horace, "and then, when I have finished it,

I shall have earned a very fair amount of money—which is particularly important to me just now."

"And why, my son, art thou so desirous of obtaining riches?"

"Because," said Horace, "unless a man is tolerably well off in these days he cannot hope to marry."

Fakrash smiled with indulgent compassion. "How excellent is the saying of one of old: 'He who adventureth upon matrimony is like unto one who thrusteth his hand into a sack containing many thousands of serpents and one eel. Yet, if Fate so decree, he *may* draw forth the eel.' And thou art comely, and of an age when it is natural to desire the love of a maiden. Therefore, be of good heart and a cheerful eye, and it may be that, when I am more at leisure, I shall find thee a helpmate who shall rejoice thy soul."

"'PLEASE DON'T TROUBLE TO FIND ME ANYTHING OF THE SORT,' SAID HORACE, HASTILY."

"Please don't trouble to find me anything of the sort!" said Horace, hastily, with a mental vision of some helpless and scandalized stranger being shot into his dwelling like coals. "I assure you I would much rather win a wife for myself in the ordinary way—as, thanks to your kindness, I have every hope of doing before long."

"Is there already some damsel for whom thy heart pineth? If so, fear not to tell me her names and dwelling place, and I will assuredly obtain her for thee."

But Ventimore had seen enough of the Jinnee's Oriental methods to doubt his tact and discretion where Sylvia was concerned. "No, no; of course not. I spoke generally," he said. "It's exceedingly kind of you—but I *do* wish I could make you understand that I am overpaid as it is. You have put me in the way to make a name and fortune for myself. If I fail, it will be my own fault. And, at all events, I want nothing more from you. If you mean to find Suleyman (on whom be peace!) you must go and live in the East altogether—for he certainly isn't over here; you must give up your whole time to it, keep as quiet as possible, and don't be discouraged by any reports you may hear. Above all, never trouble your head about me or my affairs again!"

"O, thou of wisdom and eloquence," said Fakrash, "this is most excellent advice. I will go then, but may I drink the cup of perdition if I become unmindful of thy benevolence!"

And, raising his joined hands above his head as he spoke, he sank, feet foremost, through the carpet and was gone.

"Thank Heaven," thought Ventimore, "he's taken the hint at last. I don't think I'm likely to see any more

of him. I feel an ungrateful brute for saying so, but I can't help it. I can *not* stand being under any obligation to a Jinnee who's been shut up in a beastly brass bottle ever since the days of Solomon, who probably had very good reasons for putting him there."

Horace next asked himself whether he was bound in honour to disclose the facts to Mr. Wackerbath and give him the opportunity of withdrawing from the agreement if he thought fit.

On the whole, he saw no necessity for telling him anything; the only possible result would be to make his client suspect his sanity; and who would care to employ an insane architect? Then, if he retired from the undertaking without any explanations, what could he say to Sylvia? What would Sylvia's father say to *him?* There would certainly be an end to his engagement.

After all, he had not been to blame; the Wackerbaths were quite satisfied. He felt perfectly sure that he could justify their selection of him; he would wrong nobody by accepting the commission, while he would only offend them, injure himself irretrievably, and lose all hope of gaining Sylva if he made any attempt to undeceive them.

And Fakrash was gone, never to return. So, on all these considerations, Horace decided that silence was his only possible policy, and, though some moralists may condemn his conduct as disingenuous and wanting in true moral courage, I venture to doubt whether any reader, however independent, straightforward, and indifferent to notoriety and ridicule, would have behaved otherwise in Ventimore's extremely delicate and difficult position.

Some days passed, every working hour of which was spent by Horace in the rapture of creation. To every man with the soul of an artist in him there comes—only too seldom in most cases—a revelation of latent power that he had not dared to hope for. And now with Ventimore years of study and theorizing which he had often been tempted to think wasted began to bear golden fruit. He designed and drew with a rapidity and originality, a sense of perfect mastery of the various problems to be dealt with, and a delight in the working out of mass and detail, so intoxicating that he almost dreaded lest he should be the victim of some self-delusion.

His evenings were, of course, spent with the Futvoyes, in discovering Sylvia in some new and yet more adorable aspect. Altogether, he was very much in love, very happy, and very busy—three states not invariably found in combination.

And, as he had foreseen, he had effectually got rid of Fakrash, who was evidently too engrossed in the pursuit of Solomon to think of anything else. And there seemed no reason why he should abandon his search for a generation or two, for it would probably take all that time to convince him that that mighty monarch was no longer on the throne.

"It would have been too brutal to tell him myself," thought Horace, "when he was so keen on having his case reheard. And it gives him an object, poor old buffer, and keeps him from interfering in my affairs, so it's best for both of us."

Horace's little dinner-party had been twice postponed, till he had begun to have a superstitious fear that it never would come off; but at length the Professor had been induced to give an absolute promise for a certain evening.

On the day before, after breakfast, Horace had summoned his landlady to a consultation on the *menu*. "Nothing elaborate, you know, Mrs. Rapkin," said Horace, who, though he would have liked to provide a feast of all procurable delicacies for Sylvia's refection, was obliged to respect her father's prejudices. "Just a simple dinner, thoroughly well cooked, and nicely served—as you know so well how to do it."

"I suppose, sir, you would require Rapkin to wait?"

As the ex-butler was liable to trances on these occasions, during which he could do nothing but smile and bow with speechless politeness, as he dropped sauce-boats and plates, Horace replied that he thought of having someone in, to avoid troubling Mr. Rapkin, but his wife expressed such confidence in her husband's proving equal to all emergencies, that Ventimore waived the point, and left it to her to hire extra help if she thought fit.

"Now, what soup can you give us?" he inquired, as Mrs. Rapkin stood at attention and quite unmollified.

After protracted mental conflict, she grudgingly suggested gravy soup—which Horace thought too unenterprising, and rejected in favour of mock turtle. "Well, then, fish?" he continued; "how about fish?"

Mrs. Rapkin dragged the depths of her culinary resources for several seconds, and finally brought to the surface what she called "a nice fried sole." Horace would not hear of it, and urged her to aspire to salmon; she

substituted smelts, which he opposed by a happy inspiration of turbot and lobster sauce. The sauce, however, presented insuperable difficulties to her mind, and she offered a compromise in the form of cod—which he finally accepted as a fish which the Professor could hardly censure for ostentation.

Next came the no less difficult questions of *entrée* or no *entrée*, of joint and bird. "What's in season just now?" said Horace; "let me see"—and glanced out of window as he spoke, as though in search of some outside suggestion . . . "Camels, by Jove," he suddenly exclaimed.

"*Camels*, Mr. Ventimore, sir?" repeated Mrs. Rapkin, in some bewilderment, and then, remembering that he was given to untimely flippancy, she gave a tolerant little cough.

"I'll be shot if they *aren't* camels!" said Horace. "What do *you* make of 'em, Mrs. Rapkin?"

Out of the faint mist which hung over the farther end of the square advanced a procession of tall, dust-coloured animals, with long, delicately poised necks and a mincing gait. Even Mrs. Rapkin could not succeed in making anything of them except camels.

"What the deuce does a caravan of camels want in Vincent Square?" said Horace, with a sudden qualm for which he could not quite account.

"Most likely they belong to the Barnum Show, sir," suggested his landlady. "I did hear they were coming to Olympia again this year."

"Why, of course," cried Horace, intensely relieved. "It's on their way from the Docks—at least, it isn't *out* of their way. Or probably the main road's up for repairs. That's it—they'll turn off to the left at the corner. See, they've got Arab drivers with them. Wonderful how the fellows manage them."

"It seems to me, sir," said Mrs. Rapkin, "that they're coming *our* way—they seem to be stopping outside."

"Don't talk such infernal——I beg your pardon, Mrs. Rapkin; but why on earth should Barnum and Bailey's camels come out of their way to call on *me?* It's ridiculous, you know!" said Horace, irritably.

"Ridicklous it *may* be, sir," she retorted, "but they're all layin' down on the road opposite our door, as you can see—and them niggers is making signs to you to come out and speak to 'em."

"A CARAVAN OF CAMELS."

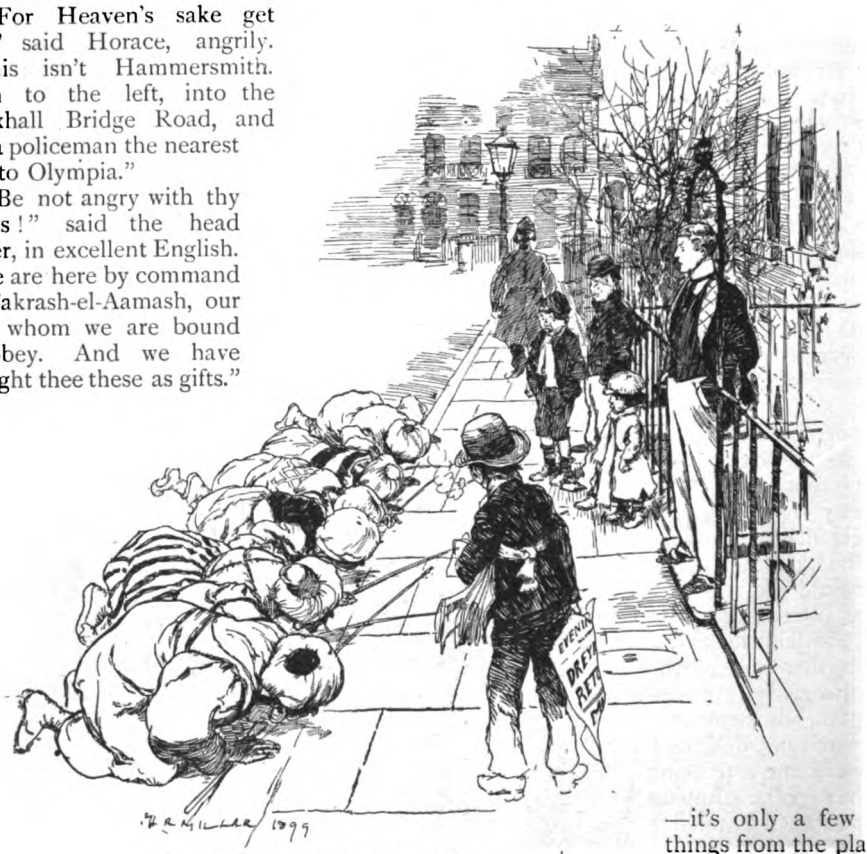
It was true enough. One by one the camels, which were apparently of the purest breed, folded themselves up in a row like camp-stools at a sign from their attendants, who were now making profound salaams towards the window where Ventimore was standing.

"I suppose I'd better go down and see what they want," he said, with rather a sickly smile. "They may have lost the way to Olympia. . . . . I only hope Fakrash isn't at the bottom of this," he thought, as he

went downstairs. "But he'd come himself—at all events, he wouldn't send me a message on such a lot of camels!" As he appeared on the doorstep all the drivers flopped down and rubbed their flat, black noses on the curbstone.

"For Heaven's sake get up!" said Horace, angrily. "This isn't Hammersmith. Turn to the left, into the Vauxhall Bridge Road, and ask a policeman the nearest way to Olympia."

"Be not angry with thy slaves!" said the head driver, in excellent English. "We are here by command of Fakrash-el-Aamash, our lord, whom we are bound to obey. And we have brought thee these as gifts."



"ALL THE DRIVERS FLOPPED DOWN."

"My compliments to your master," said Horace, between his teeth, "and tell him that a London architect has no sort of occasion for camels. Say that I am extremely obliged — but am compelled to decline them."

"O highly born one," explained the driver, "the camels are not a gift—but the loads which are upon the camels. Suffer us, therefore, since we dare not disobey our lord's commands, to carry these trifling tokens of his goodwill into thy dwelling and depart in peace."

Horace had not noticed till then that every camel bore a heavy burden, which the attendants were now unloading. "Oh, if you *must!*" he said, not too graciously, "only do look sharp about it—there's a crowd collecting already, and I don't want to have a constable here."

He returned to his rooms, where he found Mrs. Rapkin paralyzed with amazement. "It—it's all right," he said; "I'd forgotten —it's only a few Oriental things from the place where that brass bottle came from, you know. They've left them here—on approval."

"Seems funny their sending their goods 'ome on camels, sir, doesn't it?" said Mrs. Rapkin.

"Not at all funny!" said Horace; "they—they're an enterprising firm—their way of advertising."

One after another, a train of dusky attendants entered, each of whom deposited his load on the floor with a guttural grunt and retired backward, until the sitting-room was blocked with piles of sacks, and bales, and chests, whereupon the head driver appeared and intimated that the tale of gifts was complete. "I wonder what sort of tip this fellow expects," thought Horace; "a sovereign seems shabby—but it's all I can run to. I'll try him with that."

But the overseer repudiated all idea of a gratuity with stately dignity, and as Horace saw him to the gate, he found a stolid constable by the railings.

"This won't *do*, you know," said the constable; "these 'ere camels must move on—or I shall 'ave to interfere."

"It's all right, constable," said Horace, pressing into his hand the sovereign the head driver had rejected; "they're going to move on now. They've brought me a few presents from—from a friend of mine in the East."

By this time the attendants had mounted the kneeling camels, which rose with them, and swung off round the square in a long, swaying trot that soon left the crowd far behind, staring blankly after the caravan as camel after camel disappeared into the haze.

"I shouldn't mind knowin' that friend o' yours, sir," said the constable; "open-'anded sort o' gentleman, I should think?"

"Very!" said Horace, savagely, and returned to his room, which Mrs. Rapkin had now left.

His hands shook, though not with joy, as he untied some of the sacks and bales and forced open the outlandish-looking chests, the contents of which almost took away his breath.

For in the bales were carpets and tissues which he saw at a glance must be of fabulous antiquity and beyond all price; the sacks held golden ewers and vessels of strange workmanship and pantomimic proportions; the chests were full of jewels — ropes of creamy-pink pearls as large as average onions, strings of uncut rubies and emeralds, the smallest of which would have been a tight fit in an ordinary collar-box, and diamonds, roughly facetted and polished, each the size of a cocoanut, in whose hearts quivered a liquid and prismatic radiance.

On the most moderate computation, the total value of these gifts would probably greatly exceed a hundred millions; never probably in the world's history had any treasury contained so rich a store.

It would have been difficult for anybody, on suddenly finding himself the possessor of this immense incalculable wealth, to make any comment quite worthy of the situation; but, surely, none could have been more inadequate and, indeed, inappropriate than Horace's—which, heartfelt as it was, was confined to the simple monosyllable—"Damn!"

"THE CONTENTS ALMOST TOOK AWAY HIS BREATH."

(To be continued.)

Pigeons as Messengers of War.

By A. H. Osman.

THE first extensive practical application of racing pigeons as messengers in time of war was when Paris was environed by the German army in 1870. Some time after communication had been cut off from the outer world a number of pigeon-fanciers came forward and offered to place the services of their birds at the disposal of the authorities for the purpose of obtaining communication. This was ridiculed for some time, but at last an eminent aeronaut who had volunteered to cross the Prussian lines in a balloon agreed to take a consignment of pigeons with him, and it was by means of these birds that the first news was brought to the beleaguered citizens of Paris.

Only those who have been in such an unfortunate position can imagine the welcome extended to the brave little pigeon messenger. Others followed, and by means of further balloons some of the pigeons which returned made journeys over the Prussian lines as many as a dozen times—in fact, a pigeon post was established from Tours. This post was recognised by the English postal authorities, and letters at the cost of half a franc a word were sent from Tours to Paris as fast as the pigeons could be got out by balloon and conveyed from the places where they descended to Tours.

The letters, which were limited to twenty words, were set up in type, micro-photographed on thin films of collodion, inclosed in small quills, and attached to one of the tail feathers of the bird.

So complete was this organization that it gave an immediate impetus to other countries to establish pigeon posts. As soon as peace was restored France set to work to establish a complete pigeon post throughout the country. Germany, too, was not slow to recognise the immense value that such an auxiliary means of communication might be, and at the present time nearly every large fortification in Germany has a well-established loft of pigeons under command. Russia, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and Portugal all have their pigeon posts. The birds are regularly trained and kept ready for service. It is to be regretted that military lofts had not been established throughout South Africa during the time of peace, for such messengers would undoubtedly have proved invaluable in the case of Ladysmith, Kimberley, and Mafeking.

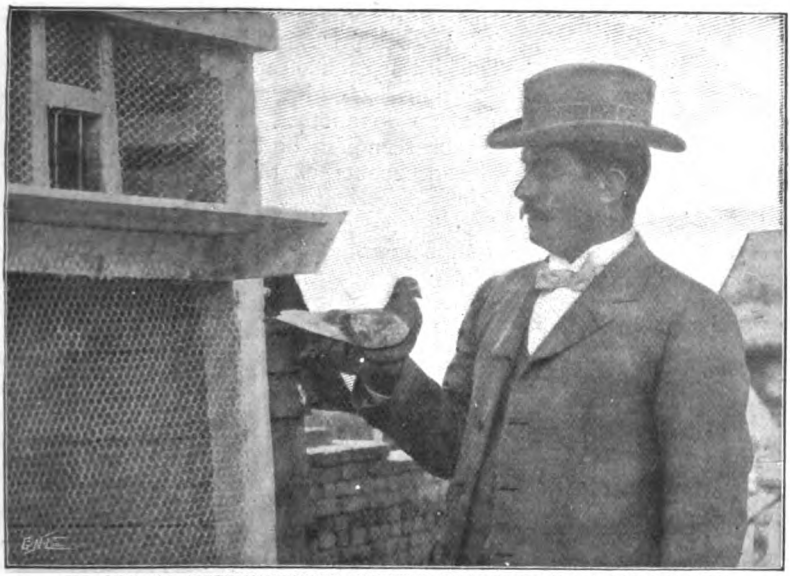
As it is, a few private fanciers placed their birds at the disposal of the authorities as in the case of the French fanciers in 1870, and it was by this means that the first tidings from our gallant troops who were confined in Ladysmith were received.

Mr. E. Lee, of Pietermaritzburg, was one of those who placed his birds at the disposal of the authorities. They were carried through to Ladysmith by an armoured train the day prior to communication being cut off; and the photograph of this gentleman and his bird is particularly interesting, as the bird depicted is the first to have been of service as a messenger of war to the English Government.

It may be interesting to consider the speed at which pigeons could convey messages of war. Much depends on atmospheric conditions and the time of the year. In the summer time birds are endowed with greater endurance than at other periods, and on a warm, genial day can easily cover a speed of 1,320yds. per minute. With a strong breeze behind them they will fly at an even greater speed than this. As to distances, I am firmly convinced that in order to place complete reliance on the prompt return of a pigeon messenger too excessive distances must not be asked of them, but they are thoroughly reliable in fine weather from 50 to 150 miles.

It is most essential, however, that in making use of pigeons as messengers of war they should be kept in perfect health and condition, for a bird that is not well cannot be expected to face the elements and return to its loft. The question whether it is sight or instinct by which the messenger is guided has been frequently discussed. After many years' practical experience with these little messengers I have come to the conclusion that sight and intelligence are the main factors guiding them to their homes, for the fact cannot be lost sight of that when sent on their journey in foggy weather, or at night, their faculties entirely fail them, whereas in the case of migratory birds guided by instinct, they fly by night as well as by day.

As showing the wonderful staying powers of these little messengers, I would refer to the performances of several racing pigeons



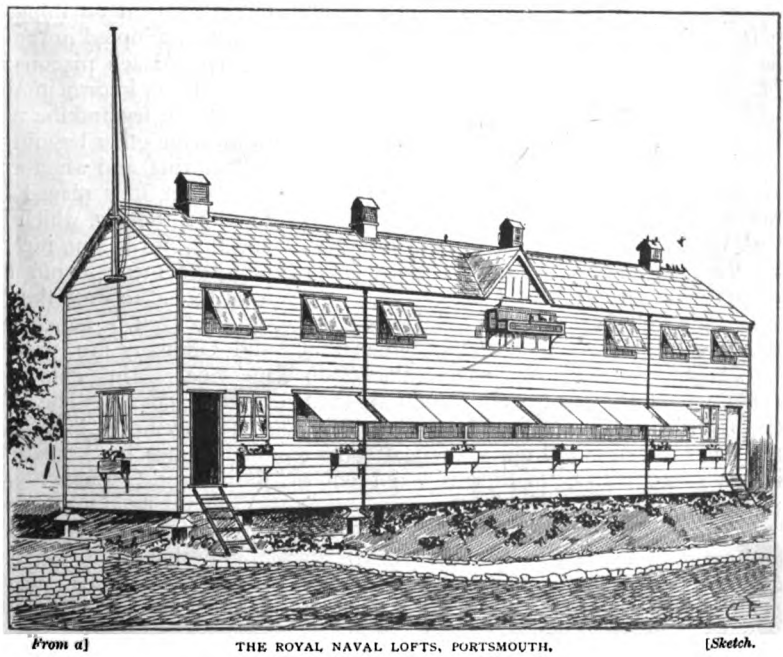
MR. LEE, OF PIETERMARITZBURG, WITH THE FIRST PIGEON WHICH BROUGHT NEWS FROM LADYSMITH.
From a] *[Photograph.*

during the past season. In the National Flying Club's race from Lerwick, Shetland Islands, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who owns a racing stud, had a bird which covered the distance of 510 miles at a speed of 1,307 yards per minute; Mr. P. Clutterbuck's bird, in the same race, flying at the rate of 1,298 yards per minute, covering a distance of 587 miles.

But although these distances are possible there would be great danger in placing reliance on pigeons as war messengers for such journeys in case the weather should prove unfavourable.

The first official recognition that pigeons might be of service in Great Britain was made a year or two back, when the Royal Naval Lofts were founded. There are three Governmental lofts — at Portsmouth, Dartmouth, and Shoeburyness. The Portsmouth lofts are situated in the Royal Clarence Victualling Yard, Gosport, and have a fine open sea-front, and great foresight has been displayed in the selection of the spot on which they stand. The birds in these lofts are numbered and registered in the same manner as our bluejackets.

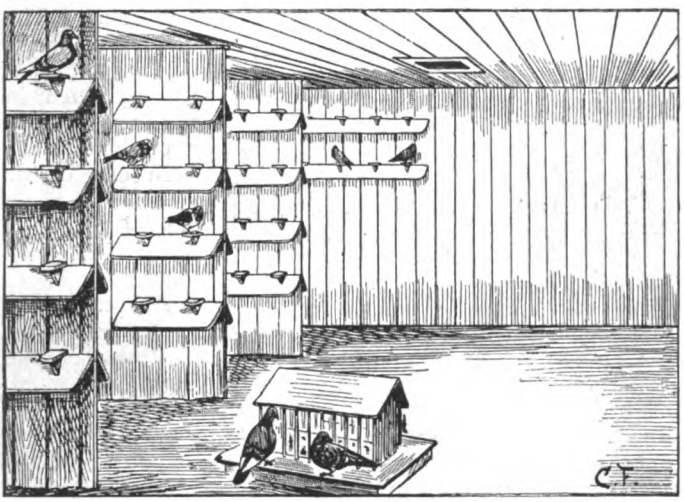
In one corner of the lofts an office is fitted up, in which the official log-books are kept. These books are of the most elaborate description, giving every detail; they consist of one for keeping a record of liberation, another for a record of pigeons homing at the loft; and in addition to these, stud registers and weekly and monthly report books, so that the trials and experiences of every pigeon are duly entered up and reported to head-quarters. There is also a register of



From a] THE ROYAL NAVAL LOFTS, PORTSMOUTH. *[Sketch.*

messages kept, in which the messages carried by each bird are pasted up and details entered in a most systematic manner. Amongst the messages to be found in this book are several that have been sent to the lofts by Her Majesty the Queen and other members of the Royal Family when crossing the Channel.

From the illustration of the Royal Naval Lofts at Portsmouth, it will be seen that there is an upper and lower division. The lower portion is devoted to permanent occupants; these have been bought from all parts of Europe, the most recent purchases having come from the famous loft of the late M. Toulet, of Belgium. A very wise rule has been made in stocking these lofts, to purchase only the best proved messengers; and no doubt the English naval lofts, if for no other purposes, should prove excellent breeding establishments, for rearing birds with which to stock any lofts that it may now be deemed necessary to found in South Africa or any of the frontiers of India.



From a] INTERIOR OF THE ROYAL NAVAL LOFTS. *[Sketch.*

A noticeable feature in the naval lofts is the tameness and tractability of the birds; this is brought about by the naval officers in charge of the birds, who are taught to treat them with care, for pigeons are most intelligent creatures, and unless their attendant is very gentle with them they will not enter the loft on their return with a message.

For the purpose of avoiding complications and saving time an excellent plan has been adopted: the upper lofts are divided in the centre by a recess leading to the trap and entrance. On the eastern side of this recess is what is described as the south-east loft. On the western side is the south-west loft. The birds in each loft are ringed with a ring on a different leg, odd numbers on one leg, even numbers on another, so that at a glance it can be seen if a bird is in its wrong loft. The occupants of the south-east loft are trained over courses in that direction, and those in the south-west loft treated in the same manner.

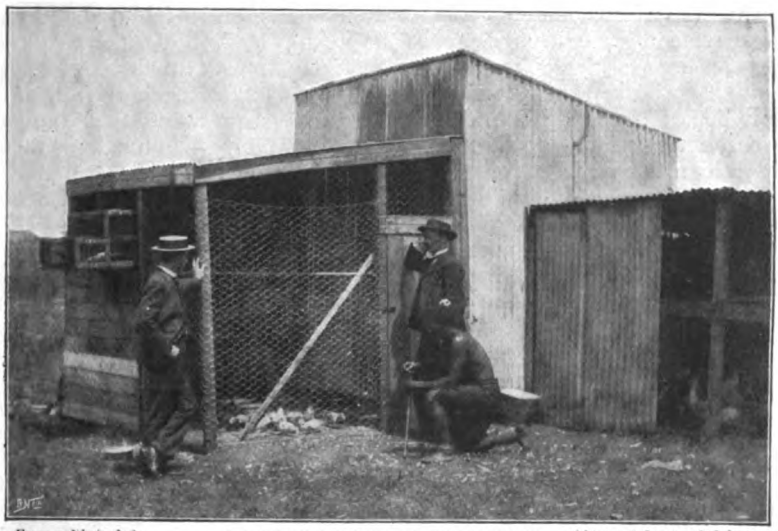
The bird's entrance to the loft and exit is through a trap; to reach the loft from the trap the birds have to pass through small boxes or apertures just sufficiently large for a pigeon to pass through. Directly a bird enters one of these boxes it is automatically shut in by a slide which slips down behind without any noise, and immediately an electric bell starts ringing in the office below, whereupon the attendant proceeds into the loft, removes the message from the bird, and it is let fly into its proper quarters without any possibility of spoiling it from entering again on some future occasion.

The method by which pigeons now carry messages is, if anything, a more simple one than that adopted in the Franco-German War of 1870. Each pigeon is, as I have already pointed out, known in the log by the metal band on its leg and the number. In addition to this, the other leg of the bird bears a stout rubber ring, and when a message is required to be sent, it is placed between the rubber ring and the leg, which keeps it in position, and the bird has no inclination to settle and pick the message off, having always been accustomed to wear the rubber band.

It may not be generally known that France and Germany are well equipped with war messengers in communication with the English coast. The Belgian fishing-boats frequently bring large numbers of birds up the Thames for liberation to return to both France and Germany.

So convinced are Frenchmen that pigeons might be a source of danger to their community that no foreigner is allowed to keep racing pigeons in France; and when English pigeons are sent there for liberation they have to undergo the supervision of the

French Customs and the Commissioner of Police, who attest to their liberation, for the danger to be feared is not so much of the birds knowing the district over which they have passed, but of spies being in possession of pigeons with which they could send prompt news to the enemy.



From a Photo. by] A BOER PIGEON LOFT AT JOHANNESBURG. *[Lister & Davies, Boksburg.*

The illustration herewith depicts a loft in possession of the Boers, and there is no doubt they are making use of pigeons for spy purposes. One English fancier in Johannesburg, who had a very large established loft, in order to prevent the Boers using them, cut the feathers off one wing of each bird, so they were useless for carrying despatches. He was imprisoned in Pretoria, but managed to escape and get through to Cape Colony.

Some people are under the belief that pigeons could be of service in taking as well as bringing messages to the same place, and a tale is often told of the fair maiden confined in the upper storey of her house so that she should not communicate with the lover her father had forbidden her to meet, sending him messages and receiving them back by the same bird; the true explanation of this being that the pigeons were lowered in a basket, and simply carried messages back to the lady-love.

Pigeons have been of service on more occasions than one in saving life. A person who was once crossing an unfrequented moor fell down a deep pit and broke his leg. Fortunately a pigeon he had with him in a basket carried the news from the mouth of the pit to his home. He was thus able to obtain succour in time to save his life.

How invaluable in the same manner might pigeons have been to those gallant fellows at Nicholson's Nek, for had they been able to communicate their position and danger to the head-quarter staff at Ladysmith, it might have saved the first of the series of disasters by which our troops were overtaken; but unfortunately there were no established lofts at Ladysmith to which a pigeon could return with the news, and, as I have pointed out, it is only to its established loft and home that the messenger will fly.

The greatest living authority on pigeons is Mr. J. W. Logan, M.P. Discussing the question as to whether pigeons would be useful or not in England in time of war, he contends that so long as we keep command of the Channel no invading army can land in England, but if we do lose command of the channel, and an army should land in England numerous and powerful enough to surround London, then a pigeon post will not save us, for London could not hold out for many days for want of food. Mr. Logan goes on to add: "I say that instead of bothering about a pigeon post for use when an army has landed, we had far better make perfectly sure, as far as we humanly can, that no invading army shall ever land. This means command of the Channel, and carries with it, to my lay mind, the ability to communicate by land by means of a despatch-boat; but," Mr. Logan adds, "matters are altogether different in South Africa and on our Indian frontiers; for instance, South Africa is a continent belonging to different Powers, the conditions of warfare are somewhat on all fours with what occurs on the Continent of Europe, and a well-organized pigeon post might prove of the very greatest service."

In the recent Spanish-American War America made good use of pigeons on several occasions, and the American navy is well supplied with thoroughly equipped and established pigeon lofts.

At the forthcoming Paris Exhibition arrangements have been made to devote a department to these messengers. Mons. Van Roosbecke has the management of this department. It is he who is renowned for the services he rendered to France in 1870 in managing the military pigeon post, in the same manner as an English fancier volunteered to go to the front in Ladysmith and organize a pigeon post there. This gentleman's name is Mr. A. Hirst, who formerly lived in Yorkshire before emigrating to South Africa.

The only pigeons available in South Africa were those lent by Mr. Lee and those belonging to a few fanciers in Durban, and it is a pity that military lofts had not been established previous to the war.

As an example of the retentive memory of a messenger pigeon, they have been known to regain their homes after three or four years' confinement in foreign lofts, and on their return have fought like gamecocks for their old perches in the loft.

It may be interesting to relate how far back pigeons have been trained as messengers. Egyptian records seem to show that war pigeons were recognised in the Nineteenth Dynasty (about 1350 B.C.). Grecian and Latin authors can also trace their history back to the days of Anacreon, Socrates, and Aristotle, so that it will be seen that pigeons have been of practical service for many centuries. When the great Battle of Waterloo was fought, pigeons conveyed the first news of the victory to the coast line, and thence by fast boat specially chartered for the purpose to London, on behalf of Messrs. Rothschilds, who thus obtained the news in advance of all other sources, and netted an immense fortune by doing so.

The pigeons that are used for carrying messages are bred solely for the purpose. Generation after generation they are trained, and the bad ones get lost. The young birds, after acquiring the power of flight and learning the contour of the country in their circuits around home, are taken by gradual stages over the course they are required to fly. First they are liberated at one mile, then two, and by gradually increased stages. This training is absolutely essential if birds are to be relied upon as messengers. The birds most valued are almost all descended from the racing pigeon—*le pigeon voyageur*—of Belgium, in which country pigeon-racing has been carried on for many years, and has attained its highest development, and it is from Belgium that France, Germany, England, and other countries have obtained most of their best birds in the past.

In England at the present time there are over twenty thousand fanciers owning probably five hundred thousand birds, all of which would be willingly placed at the service of the English Government in case of necessity.

Of course great danger exists in a messenger being shot by the enemy when attempting to return to its loft, but far more reliance could be placed on getting news through an enemy's lines than by runner.

The management of a pigeon loft is a very simple matter: the birds require food, such as peas and beans, of the best possible quality, and, as with the case of all animals, must be kept perfectly clean and given fresh water daily.

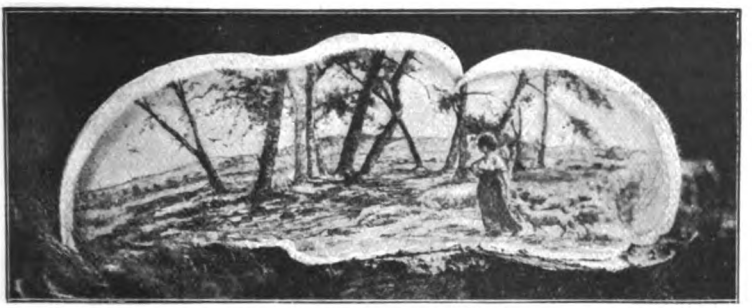
As will be seen from the illustration of the Boer loft, they do not require a very elegant house to live in, but at the same time cats have a partiality for messengers, and the home has to be constructed out of reach of visitors of this description.

In India several lofts have been established at Secunderabad and Deccan by "Tommy Atkins," and it is hoped that now the valuable services have been so strikingly proved by the Ladysmith pigeons, no time will be lost in establishing military lofts throughout India.

In New Zealand the Great Barrier pigeon post has been established, and the New Zealand Parliament recognise the value of these messengers by allowing their owners to train them free of cost over the State railways.

Unfortunately, pigeons are frequently shot when returning to their homes. An Act of Parliament makes this penal if done wilfully and unlawfully. It is to be hoped that those who have now, for the first time, been made acquainted with the value of these birds as messengers, will hold their hand should an opportunity offer when out shooting, and think of the value of the brave little bird and the important message it may be in the act of conveying.

The value of these birds depends much upon their good qualities. The highest price ever paid for birds of this description was at a sale of Mr. J. W. Logan's birds in 1886, when some of the birds were knocked down at £30, £40, and £50 each, and there is no doubt at the present time that many of the finest birds in the world are descended from this famous breeder's stock.



A FUNGUS ETCHING, REPRESENTING LOROLLES'S "SHEPHERDESS."

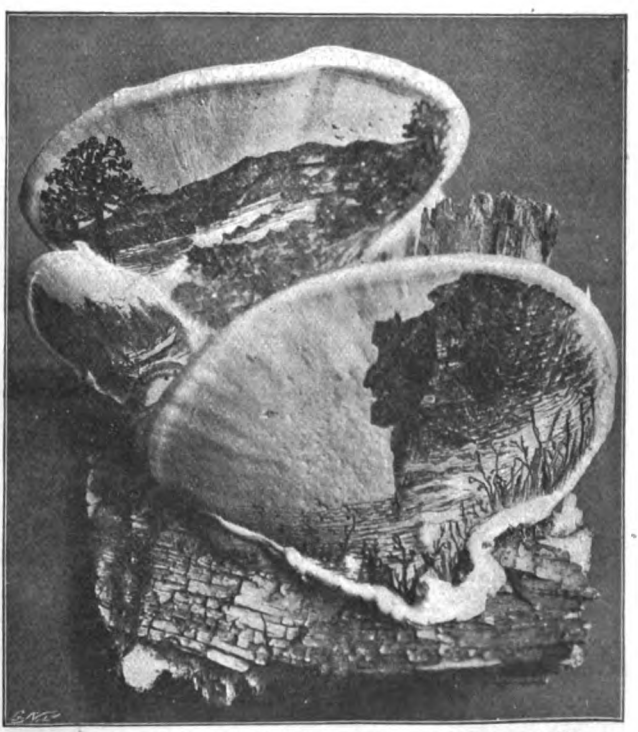
Pictures on Fungi.

By George Dollar.

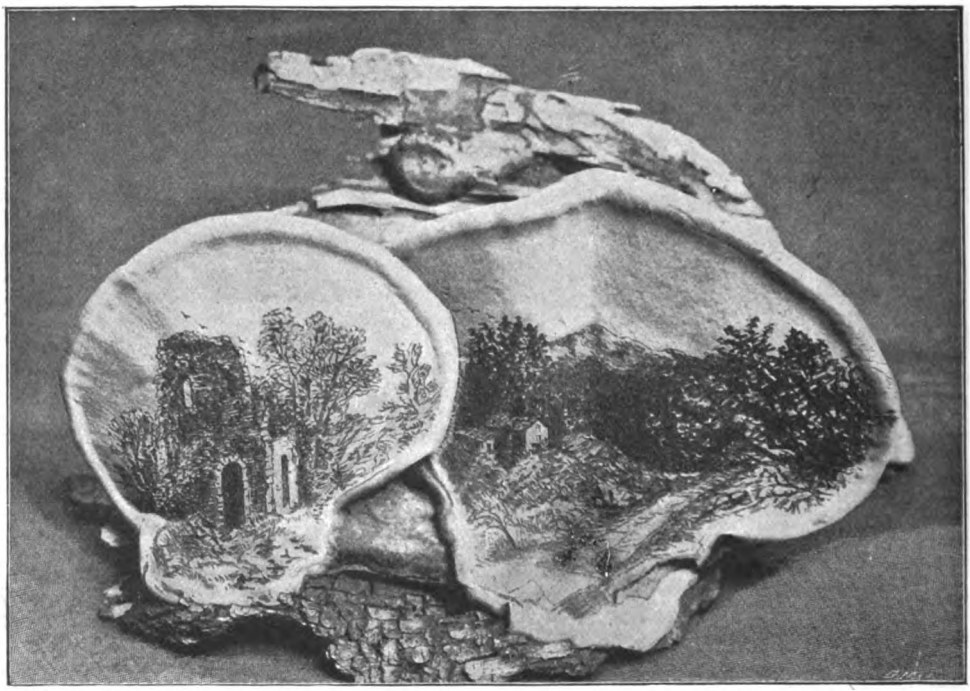
THERE is hardly a thing in Nature which may not be turned to a beautiful or a useful end. Witness, for instance, the beautiful illustrations in this article. At first sight you would think them to be the product of the potter's art, decorated by the deft hand of some designer. They stand out boldly on the page, and the lover of figure and landscape feels a passing pleasure when looking at their delicate and graceful lines. Had we not already told you in our title what these pretty pictures show, you would be surprised to find that they are not a potter's work, but merely etchings on the fungus growth of trees.

They are, moreover, but a few of a remarkable collection belonging to Mrs. Martha P. Cooper, a portrait painter, who lives in Concord, New Hampshire. She has been at work upon her collection for nine successive years, and has spent her summers and her leisure time visiting the primeval wilds of the New England States, hunting tirelessly for these curious canvases, which Nature provides all too rarely. In a letter she tells us of a visit to the Bradford Sulphur Springs in September, 1891, with a party of ladies and gentlemen. "During the visit," she Mrs. Cooper writes, "the gentlemen of the party came to me and said they had found some very wonderful formations upon the dead wood, which they were waiting to gather for me. They had seen something marked upon them which led them to think that, by careful manipulation, a picture could be worked out very effectively; and would I take up the work?"

The idea did not appeal to the artist, but after deliberation she decided to see what could be done with the fungi. Her friends brought her not only beautiful formations of



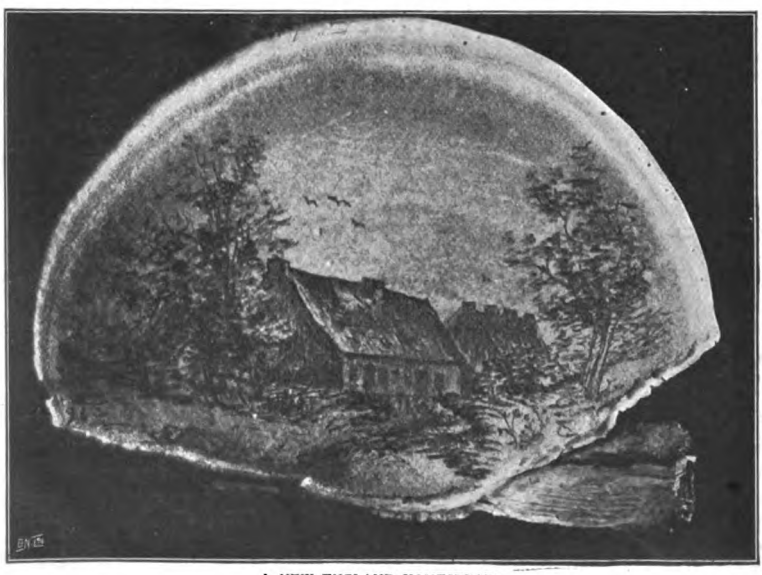
THE "OLD MAN" OF THE WHITE MOUNTAINS, ETCHED ON FUNGUS.



LANDSCAPES ON FUNGUS.

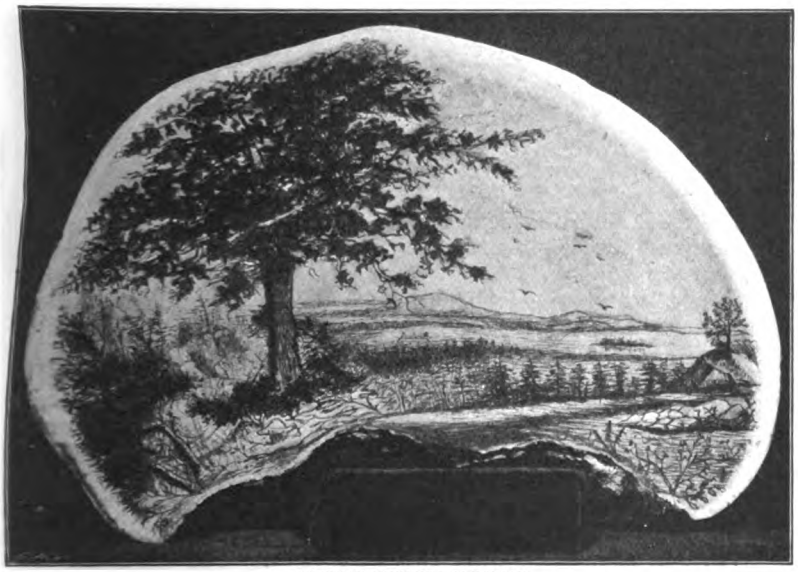
fungi, but pictures to be reproduced thereon. "I shut myself in my room," she writes; "day after day I studied, getting acquainted with the quality and character of the pigment that lay beneath their creamy surface. I gradually learned to be fascinated with their sepia tints, and wondered what it all meant—that after the stump and tree became lifeless these unique formations came out. Some of them," the writer sympathetically adds, "were fan-shaped, child-like, and pure as the lily that springs up from the muddy waters in symmetrical beauty, sensitiveness, and complexion."

Others were grotesque and incapable of being engraved upon. But enough perfect formations were found to keep up her interest for weeks. These, with the additions of future years, have formed a collection of great value, and one undoubtedly unique in the United States.



A NEW ENGLAND HOMESTEAD.

The illustrations reproduced show a variety of subjects mainly connected with familiar New England scenes. The head-piece to our article is a graphic copy of Lorolles's "Shepherdess." The illustration at the



ANOTHER FUNGUS LANDSCAPE.

bottom of the first page represents the famous "Old Man" of the White Mountains, and a New Hampshire lake scene depicted on a fungus 5in. wide. The others possess little except a local interest to justify a title. They are all landscapes, because, as Mrs. Cooper says, "nothing but a landscape is in harmony with the growth." None, again, is desirable except that fungus formation which has a white frame around it, a feature prominently shown in all the photographs produced.

Unfortunately this quality of fungi is very rare. "I have hunted over miles and miles of forestry," adds Mrs. Cooper on this point, "without finding one reliable formation. I have been rowed over the waters of Lake Winnipiseogee and Lake Sunapee, in expectation of finding superior formations, for I had been told they grew abundantly upon the banks of these waters. Yet I found none."

The pictures are drawn by running sharp steel points through the creamy-coloured face of the fungus, furrowing up a brown tint thereon. The design is roughly marked out, and the detail put in afterwards just as an ordinary painter works upon his canvas. All of the fungi are of an exceedingly sensitive nature, and the woods which afford the best material on which to work are the yellow and black beeches, and the yellow, grey, and black birches.

Mrs. Cooper's collection cannot be duplicated, simply because Nature never repeats herself. "I have," she says, "some growths an inch and a half across, others a foot and a half, yet all fan-shaped. I value them from three dollars to seventy-five dollars each, and enjoy preparing them as I have never enjoyed any other branch of art. I have sold many of them to travellers, and my work gladdens the homes of the West as well as the East." There are many, we may add, in the United States to-day who, under Mrs. Cooper's care, have learnt to use the fungi for decorative purposes, but none more skilfully than she. With her it has been mostly a labour of love, and it grows to greater beauty each succeeding year.

MRS MARTHA P. COOPER—THE ARTIST AND OWNER OF THE COLLECTION.
From a Photo. by Lothrop & Cunningham, Lowell, Mass.

A Master of Craft.

By W. W. Jacobs.

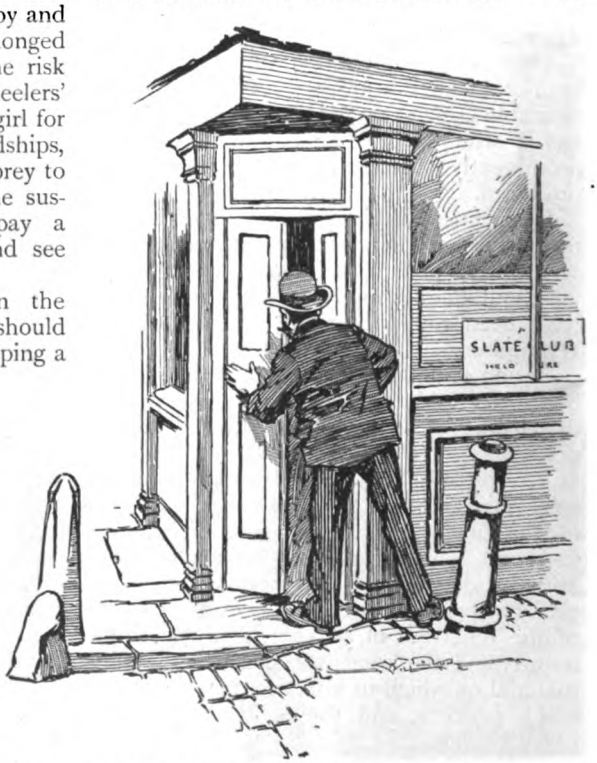
XIX.

OPPONENTS of medicine have hit upon a means of cleansing the system by abstaining for a time from food, and drinking a quantity of fair water. It is stated to clear the eyes and the skin, and to cause a feeling of lightness and buoyancy undreamt of by those who have never tried it. All people, perhaps, are not affected exactly alike, and Captain Flower, while admitting the lightness, would have disdainfully contested any charge of buoyancy. Against this objection it may be said that he was not a model patient, and had on several occasions wilfully taken steps to remove the feeling of lightness.

It was over a fortnight since his return to London. The few shillings obtained for his watch had disappeared days before; rent was due and the cupboard was empty. The time seemed so long to him that Poppy and Seabridge and the *Foam* might have belonged to another period of existence. At the risk of detection he had hung round the Wheelers' night after night for a glimpse of the girl for whom he was enduring all these hardships, but without success. He became a prey to nervousness and, unable to endure the suspense any longer, determined to pay a stealthy visit to Wapping and try and see Fraser.

He chose the night on which in the ordinary state of affairs the schooner should be lying alongside the wharf; and, keeping a a keen look-out for friends and foes both, made his way to the Minories and down Tower Hill. He had pictured it as teeming with people he knew, and the bare street and closed warehouses, with a chance docker or two slouching slowly along, struck him with an odd sense of disappointment. The place seemed changed. He hurried past the wharf; that too was deserted, and after a loving peep at the spars of his schooner he drifted slowly across the road to the Albion, and, pushing the door a little way open, peeped cautiously in. The faces were all unfamiliar, and letting the door swing quietly back he walked on until he came to the Town of Yarmouth.

The public bar was full. Tired workers were trying to forget the labours of the day in big draughts of beer, while one of them had thrown off his fatigue sufficiently to show a friend a fancy step of which he was somewhat vain. It was a difficult and intricate step for a crowded bar, and panic-stricken men holding their beer aloft called wildly upon him to stop, while the barman, leaning over the counter, strove to make his voice heard above the din. The dancer's feet subsided into a sulky shuffle, and a tall seaman, removing the tankard which had obscured his face, revealed the honest features of Joe. The sight of him and the row of glasses and hunches of bread and cheese behind the bar was irresistible. The



"PUSHING THE DOOR A LITTLE WAY OPEN HE PEEPED CAUTIOUSLY IN."

Copyright, 1900, by W. W. Jacobs, in the United States of America.

skipper caught a departing customer by the coat and held him.

"Do me a favour, old man," he said, heartily.

"Wot d'ye want?" asked the other, suspiciously.

"Tell that tall chap in there that a friend of his is waiting outside," said Flower, pointing to Joe.

He walked off a little way as the man re-entered the bar. A second or two later the carman came out alone.

"'E ses come inside, 'e ses, if you want to see 'im."

"I can't," said Flower.

"Why not?" asked the other, as a horrible suspicion dawned upon him. "Strewth, you ain't a teetotaler, are you?"

"No," replied the skipper, "but I can't go in."

"Well, 'e won't come out," said the other; "'e seems to be a short-tempered sort o' man."

"I must see him," said the skipper, pondering. Then a happy thought struck him, and he smiled at his cleverness. "Tell him a little flower wants to see him," he said, briskly.

"A little wot?" demanded the carman, blankly.

"A little flower," repeated the other.

"Where is she?" inquired the carman, casting his eyes about him.

"You just say that," said the skipper, hurriedly. "You shall have a pint if you do. He'll understand."

It was unfortunate for the other that the skipper had set too high an estimation on Joe's intelligence, for the information being imparted to him in the audible tones of confidence, he first gave his mug to Mr. William Green to hold, and then knocked the ambassador down. The loud laugh consequent on the delivery of the message ceased abruptly, and in the midst of a terrific hubbub Joe and his victim, together with two or three innocent persons loudly complaining that they hadn't finished their beer, were swept into the street.

"He'll be all right in a minute, mate," said a bystander to Joe, anxiously; "don't run away."

"'Tain't so likely," said Joe, scornfully.

"Wot did you 'it me for?" demanded the victim, turning a deaf ear to two or three strangers who were cuddling him affectionately and pointing out, in alluring whispers, numberless weak points in Joe's fleshly armour.

"I'll 'it you agin if you come into a pub making a fool of me afore people," replied the sensitive seaman, blushing hotly with the recollection of the message.

"He told me to," said the carman, pointing to Flower, who was lurking in the background.

The tall seaman turned fiercely and strode up to him, and then, to the scandal of the bystanders and the dismay of Mr. William Green, gave a loud yell and fled full speed up the road. Flower followed in hot pursuit, and owing, perhaps, to the feeling of lightness before mentioned, ran him down nearly a mile farther on, Mr. Green coming in a good second.

"Keep orf," panted the seaman, backing into a doorway. "Keep—it—orf!"

"Don't be a fool, Joe," said the skipper.

"Keep orf," repeated the trembling seaman.

His fear was so great that Mr. Green, who had regarded him as a tower of strength and courage, and had wormed himself into the tall seaman's good graces by his open admiration of these qualities, stood appalled at his idol's sudden lack of spirit.

"Don't be a fool, Joe," said the skipper, sharply; "can't you see it's me?"

"I thought you was drownded," said the trembling seaman, still regarding him suspiciously. "I thought you was a ghost."

"Feel that," said Flower, and gave him a blow in the ribs which almost made him regret that his first impression was not the correct one.

"I'm satisfied, sir," he said, hastily.

"I was picked up and carried off to Riga: but for certain reasons I needn't go into I want my being alive kept a dead secret. You mustn't breathe a word to anybody, d'ye understand? Not a word."

"Aye, aye, sir," said Joe; "you hear that, Will-yum?"

"Who the deuce is this?" demanded the skipper, who had not bargained for another confidant.

"It's the new 'and, sir," said Joe. "I'll be answerable for 'im."

Flower eyed the pair restlessly, but Mr. Green assured him with a courtly bow that Mr. Smith's assurances might be relied upon. "He hoped he was a gentleman," he said, feelingly.

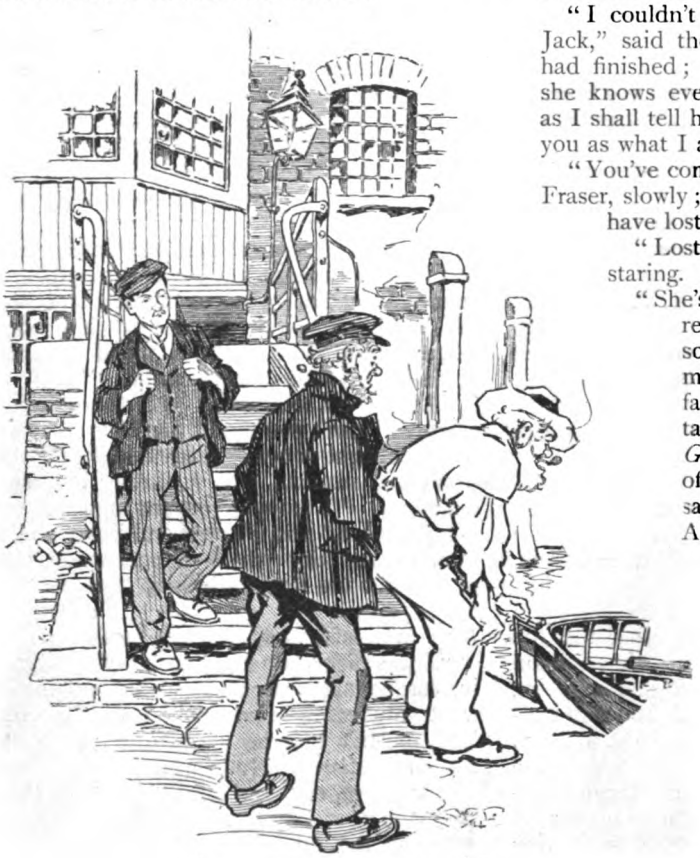
"Some of us thought—I thought," said Joe, with a glance at the skipper, "that the mate shoved you overboard."

"You always were a fool," commented the skipper.

"Yes, sir," said Joe, dutifully, and as they moved slowly back along the road gave him the latest information about Seabridge and the *Foam*.

"The *Swallow's* just come up in the tier," he concluded; "and if you want to see Mr. Fraser, I'll go and see if he's aboard."

The skipper agreed, and after exacting renewed assurances of secrecy from both men, waited impatiently in the private bar of the Waterman's Arms while they put off from the stairs and boarded the steamer.



"THEY PUT OFF FROM THE STAIRS."

In twenty minutes, during which time the penniless skipper affected not to notice the restless glances of the landlord, they returned with Fraser, and a hearty meeting took place between the two men. The famished skipper was provided with meat and drink, while the two A.B.'s wetted their thirst in the adjoining bar.

"You've had a rough time," said Fraser, as the skipper concluded a dramatic recital of his adventures.

Flower smiled broadly. "I've come out of it right side uppermost," he said, taking a hearty pull at his tankard; "the worst part was losing my money. Still, it's all in the day's work. Joe tells me that Elizabeth is walking out with Gibson, so you see it has all happened as I bargained for"

"I've heard so," said Fraser.

"It's rather soon after my death," said Flower, thoughtfully; "she's been driven into it by her mother, I expect. How is Poppy?"

Fraser told him.

"I couldn't wish her in better hands, Jack," said the other, heartily, when he had finished; "one of these days when she knows everything—at least, as much as I shall tell her—she'll be as grateful to you as what I am."

"You've come back just in time," said Fraser, slowly; "another week, and you'd have lost her."

"Lost her?" repeated Flower, staring.

"She's going to New Zealand," replied the other; "she's got some relations there. She met an old friend of her father's the other day, Captain Martin, master of the *Golden Cloud*, and he has offered her a passage. They sail on Saturday from the Albert Dock."

Flower pushed the tankard from him, and regarded him in consternation.

"She mustn't go," he said, decisively.

Fraser shrugged his shoulders. "I tried to persuade her not to, but it was no use. She said there was nothing to stay in England for; she's quite alone, and there is nobody to miss her."

"Poor girl," said Flower, softly, and sat crumbling his bread and gazing reflectively at a soda-water advertisement on the wall. He sat so long in this attitude that his companion also turned and studied it.

"She mustn't go," said Flower, at length. "I'll go down and see her to-morrow night. You go first and break the news to her, and I'll follow on. Do it gently, Jack. It's quite safe; there's nobody she can talk to now; she's left the Wheelers, and I'm simply longing to see her. You

don't know what it is to be in love, Jack."

"What am I to tell her?" inquired the other, hastily.

"Tell her I was saved," was the reply. "I'll do the rest. By Jove, I've got it."

He banged the table so hard that his plate jumped and the glasses in the bar rattled in protest.

"Anything wrong with the grub," inquired the landlord, severely.

Flower, who was all excitement, shook his head.

"Because if there is," continued the landlord, "I'd sooner you spoke of it than smash the table; never mind about hurting my feelings."

He wiped down the counter to show that Flower's heated glances had no effect upon *him*, withdrawing reluctantly to serve an impatient customer.

"I'll go down to-morrow morning to the *Golden Cloud* and try and ship before the mast," said Flower, excitably; "get married out in New Zealand, and then come home when things are settled. What do you think of that, my boy? How does that strike you?"

"How will it strike Cap'n Barber?" asked Fraser, as soon as he had recovered sufficiently to speak.

Flower's eyes twinkled. "It's quite easy to get wrecked and picked up once or twice," he said, cheerfully. "I'll have my story pat by the time I get home, even to the names of the craft I was cast away in. And I can say I heard of Elizabeth's marriage from somebody I met in New Zealand. I'll manage all right."

The master of the *Swallow* gazed at him in helpless fascination.

"They want hands on the *Golden Cloud*," he said, slowly; "but what about your discharges?"

"I can get those," said Flower, complacently; "a man with money and brains can do anything. Lend me a pound or two before I forget it, will you? And if you'll give me Poppy's address, I'll be outside the house at seven to-morrow. Lord, fancy being on the same ship with her for three months."

He threw down a borrowed sovereign on the counter, and, ordering some more drinks, placed them on the table. Fraser had raised his to his lips when he set it down again, and with a warning finger called the other's attention to the remarkable behaviour of the door communicating with the next bar, which, in open defiance of the fact that it possessed a patent catch of the latest pattern, stood open at least three or four inches.

"Draught?" questioned Flower, staring at the phenomenon.

The other shook his head. "I'd forgotten those two chaps," he said, in a low voice; "they've been listening."

Flower shifted in his seat. "I'd trust Joe anywhere," he said, uneasily, "but I don't know about the other chap. If he starts talking at Seabridge I'm done. I thought Joe was alone when I sent in for him."

Fraser tapped his chin with his fingers. "I'll try and get 'em to ship with me. I want a couple of hands," he said, slowly. "I'll have them under my eye then, and, besides, they're better at Bittlesea than Seabridge in any case."

He rose noisily, and followed by Flower entered the next bar. Twenty minutes afterwards Flower bade them all a hearty good-night, and Mr. Green, walking back to the schooner with Joe, dwelt complacently on the advantages of possessing a style and

"'IT'S QUITE EASY TO GET WRECKED,' HE SAID, CHEERFULLY."

address which had enabled them to exchange the rudeness of Ben for the appreciative amiability of Captain Fraser.

Flower was punctual to the minute next evening, and shaking hands hastily with Fraser, who had gone down to the door to wait for him, went in alone to see Miss Tyrell. Fraser, smoking his pipe on the doorstep, gave him a quarter of an hour, and then went upstairs, Miss Tyrell making a futile attempt to escape from the captain's encircling arm as he entered the room. Flower had just commenced the recital of his adventures. He broke off as the other entered, but being urged by Miss Tyrell to continue, glanced somewhat sheepishly at his friend before complying.

"When I rose to the surface," he said, slowly, "and saw the ship drawing away in the darkness and heard the cries on board, I swam as strongly as I could towards it. I was weighed down by my clothes, and I had also struck my head going overboard, and I felt that every moment was my last, when I suddenly bumped up against the lifebelt. I just had strength to put that on and give one faint hail, and then I think for a time I lost my senses."

Miss Tyrell gave an exclamation of pity; Mr. Fraser made a noise which might have been intended for the same thing.

"The rest of it was like a dream," continued Flower, pressing the girl's hand; "sometimes my eyes were open and sometimes not. I heard the men pulling about and hailing me without being able to reply. By-and-by that ceased, the sky got grey and the water brown; all feeling had gone out of me. The sun rose and burnt in the salt on my face; then, as I rose and fell like a cork on the waters, your face seemed to come before me, and I determined to live."

"Beautiful," said Fraser, involuntarily.

"I determined to live," repeated Flower, glancing at him defiantly. "I brushed the wet hair from my eyes, and strove to move my chilled limbs. Then I shouted, and anything more dreary than that shout across the waste of water I cannot imagine, but it did me good to hear my own voice, and I shouted again."

He paused for breath, and Fraser, taking advantage of the pause, got up hurriedly and left the room, muttering something about matches.

"He doesn't like to hear of your sufferings," said Poppy.

"I suppose not," said Flower, whose eloquence had received a chill, "but there is little more to tell. I was picked up by a Russian brig bound for Riga, and lay there for some time in a state of fever. When I got better I worked my passage home in a timber boat and landed yesterday."

"What a terrible experience," said Poppy, as Fraser entered the room again.

"Shocking," said the latter.

"And now you've got your own ship again," said the girl, "weren't your crew delighted to see you?"

"I've not seen them yet," said Flower, hesitatingly. "I shipped on another craft this morning before the mast."

"Before the mast?" repeated the girl, in amazement.

"Full-rigged ship *Golden Cloud*, bound for New Zealand," said Flower, slowly, watching the effect of his words—"we're to be shipmates."

Poppy Tyrell started up with a faint cry, but Flower drew her gently down again.

"We'll be married in New Zealand," he said, softly, "and then we'll come back and I'll have my own again. Jack told me you were going out on her. Another man has got my craft; he lost the one he had before, and I want to give him a chance for a few months, poor chap, to redeem his character. Besides, it'll be a change. We shall see the world. It'll just be a splendid honeymoon."

"You didn't tell Captain Martin?" inquired the girl, as she drew back in her chair and eyed him perplexedly.

"Not likely," said Flower, with a laugh. "I've shipped in the name of Robert Orth. I bought the man's discharges this morning. He's lying in bed, poor chap, waiting for his last now, and hoping it'll be marked 'v.g.'"

Poppy was silent. For a moment her eyes, dark and inscrutable, met Fraser's; then she looked away, and in a low voice addressed Flower.

"I suppose you know best what is to be done," she said, quietly.

"You leave it to me," said Flower, in satisfied tones. "I'm at the wheel."

There was a long silence. Poppy got up and crossed to the window, and, resting her cheek on her hand, sat watching the restless life of the street. The room darkened slowly with the approach of evening. Flower rose and took the seat opposite, and Fraser, who had been feeling in the way for some time, said that he must go.

"You sail to-morrow evening, Jack?" said Flower, with a careless half-turn towards him.

"About six," was the reply.

"We sail Saturday evening at seven,"

said Flower, and took the girl's hand in his own. "It will be odd to see you on board, Poppy, and not to be able to speak to you; but we shall be able to look at each other, sha'n't we?"

"Captain Martin is a strict disciplinarian," said Poppy.

"Well he can't prevent us looking at each other," said Flower, "and he can't prevent us marrying when we get to the other end. Good-night, Jack. Next time you see us we'll be an old married couple."

"A quick passage and a safe return," said Fraser. "Good-night."

"POPPY SAT WATCHING THE RESTLESS LIFE OF THE STREET."

Poppy Tyrell just gave him her small hand, and that was all. Flower, giving him a hearty grip, accompanied him as far as the door of the room. He looked back as he gained the pavement, and the last he saw of them they were sitting at the open window. Flower leaned out and waved his hand in farewell, but Poppy made no sign.

XX.

In the rising seaport of Bittlesea Captain Fraser, walking slowly along the quay on the fateful Saturday, heard the hour of seven strike from the tower of the old church wedged in between the narrow streets at the back of the town. The little harbour with its motley collection of craft vanished; he heard the sharp, hoarse cries of command on the *Golden Cloud*, and saw the bridge slowly opening to give egress to the tug which had her in tow. He saw her shapely hull and tapering spars glide slowly down the river, while Poppy Tyrell, leaning against the side, took her last look at London. He came back with a sigh to reality: the *Swallow* had dwindled to microscopical proportions, and looked dirty; Bittlesea itself had the appearance of a village with foolish aspirations to be considered a port, and he noticed, with a strong sense of pity tempered with disdain, the attentions of two young townsmen to a couple of gawky girls in white frocks.

With a feeling that the confinement of the house would be insupportable, he roamed idly about until the day gave place to twilight, and the red eye of the lightship on the horizon peeped suddenly across the water. Bittlesea was dull to aching point; a shirt-sleeved householder or two sat in his fragrant front garden smoking, and a murmur of voices and shag tobacco floated out from tavern doorways. He paced up and down the quay, until the necessity of putting a stop to the vagaries of his crew furnished him with a little wholesome diversion.

In their quest for good beer Mr. Green and Joe had left themselves in the hands of the other members of the crew, and had gone off with them in a body to the Cap and Bells, where, in a most pointed fashion, Mr. Green, who had been regarding the fireman's complexion for some time with much displeasure, told the boy to go back to the ship and get his face washed.

"He's all right, ain't you, Tommy?" said the cook, coming to the rescue.

"Boys ought to keep their faces clean," said Mr. Green, impressively; "there's nothing more unpleasant than a face what wants washing. You don't want to grow up like that, do you? Look at it, Joe."

"It might be cleaner," said Joe, thus appealed to, slowly; "likewise it might be dirtier."

"It might be much dirtier," said Mr. Green, emphatically; "anybody with eyes in their 'ed can see that."

There was an awkward pause, during

which the fireman, with one eye peeping furtively from beyond the rim of a quart pot, saw both Joe and the cook kick Mr. Green's foot to call his attention to the fact that his words might be misconstrued by another member of the party.

"I 'ate toffs," he said, deliberately, as he placed his mug on the counter.

"They're all right when you know 'em, Charlie," said Joe, who was averse to having the evening spoiled at that early hour.

"A real toff's bad enough," continued the fireman, "but a himitation one—pah!" He buried his face in the pewter again, and laughed discordantly.

"You go aboard and wash your face, Tommy," repeated Mr. Green. "I should think you'd find plenty o' soap in Charlie's bunk."

"Do you know what you want?" demanded the fireman, regarding him fixedly.

"I know what you want," said Mr. Green, with a supercilious smile.

"Oh! Wot?" said the other.

The seaman rose to his feet and watched him carefully. "A banjo," he replied.

It was not the reply according to time-honoured formula, and Charlie, who was expecting something quite different, was at no pains to hide his perplexity. *A banjo?* he repeated, slowly, "a banjo—a ban——?"

Light came to him suddenly, and he flew at Mr. Green with his fists whirling. In a second the bar was in an uproar, and the well-meant and self-preservative efforts of Joe and the cook to get the combatants into the street were frustrated by people outside blocking up the doors. They came out at last, and Fraser, who was passing, ran over just in time to save Mr. Green, who was doing his best, from the consequences of a somewhat exaggerated fastidiousness. The incident, however, afforded a welcome distraction, and having seen Mr. Green off in the direction of the steamer, while the fireman returned to the public-house, he bent his steps homewards and played a filial game at cards with his father before retiring.

They sailed for London the following afternoon, Mr. Green taking a jaundiced view of the world from a couple of black eyes, while the fireman openly avowed that only the economical limitations of Nature prevented him from giving him more. Fraser, a prey to gentle melancholy, called them to order once or twice, and then left them to the mate, a man whose talent for ready invective was at once the admiration and envy of his peers.

The first night in London he spent on board, and with pencil and paper sat down to work out the position of the *Golden Cloud*. He pictured her with snowy pinions outspread, passing down Channel. He pictured Poppy sitting on the poop in a deck-chair and Flower coming as near as his work would allow, exchanging glances with her. Then he went up on deck, and, lighting his pipe, thought of that never-to-be-forgotten night when Poppy had first boarded the *Foam*.

The next night his mood changed, and unable to endure the confinement of the ship, he went for a lonely tramp round the streets. He hung round the Wheelers', and, after gazing at their young barbarians at play, walked round and looked at Flower's late lodgings. It was a dingy house, with broken railings and an assortment of papers and bottles in the front garden, and by no means calculated to relieve depression. From there he instinctively wandered round to the lodgings recently inhabited by Miss Tyrell.

He passed the house twice, and noted with gloom the already neglected appearance of her front window. The venetian blind, half drawn up, was five or six inches higher one side than the other, and a vase of faded flowers added to the forlornness of the picture. In his present state of mind the faded blooms seemed particularly appropriate, and suddenly determining to possess them, he walked up the steps and knocked at the door, trembling like a young housebreaker over his first job.

"I think I left my pipe here the other night," he stammered to the small girl who opened it.

"I'll swear you didn't," said the small damsel, readily.

"Can I go up and see?" inquired Fraser, handing her some coppers.

The small girl relented, and even offered to assist him in his search, but he waved her away, and going upstairs sat down and looked drearily round the shabby little room. An execrable ornament of green and pink paper in the fireplace had fallen down, together with a little soot; there was dust on the table, and other signs of neglect. He crossed over to the window and secured two or three of the blooms, and was drying the stalks on his handkerchief when his eye suddenly lighted on a little white ball on the mantelpiece, and, hardly able to believe in his good fortune, he secured a much-darned pair of cotton gloves, which had apparently been forgotten in the hurry of departure. He unrolled them, and pulling out the little shrivelled fingers,

"HE REGARDED THEM WITH MOURNFUL TENDERNESS."

regarded them with mournful tenderness. Then he smoothed them out, and folding them with reverent fingers, placed them carefully in his breast-pocket. He then became conscious that somebody was regarding his antics with amazement from the doorway.

"*Mr. Fraser!*" said a surprised voice, which tried to be severe.

Mr. Fraser bounded from his chair, and stood regarding the intruder with a countenance in which every feature was outvying the other in amazement.

"I thought — you —were on the *Golden Cloud*," he stammered.

Miss Tyrell shook her head and looked down. "I missed the ship," she said, pensively.

"Missed the ship?" shouted the other; "missed the ship? Did Flower miss it too?"

"I'm afraid not," said Miss Tyrell, even more pensively than before.

"Good heavens, I never heard of such a thing," said Fraser; "how ever did you manage to do it?"

"I went to lie down a litte while on Saturday afternoon," said Poppy, reflectively; "I'd got my box packed and everything ready; when I got up it was past seven o'clock, and then I knew it was no use. Ships won't wait, you know."

Fraser gazed at her in amaze. In his mind's eye he still saw the deck of the *Golden Cloud;* but Poppy's deck-chair was empty, and Flower, in place of exchanging glances with her, was walking about in a state equally compounded of wrath and bewilderment.

"And you had given up your berth in the City?" said Fraser, at length, in concern.

The consciousness of a little colour in her cheek which she could not repress affected Miss Tyrell's temper. "No," she said, sharply.

"Didn't you intend to go, then?" asked the bewildered Fraser.

"I—oh, will you give me my gloves, please, before I forget them?" said Miss Tyrell, coldly.

It was Fraser's turn to colour, and he burnt a rich crimson as he fished them out.

"I was going to take care of them for you," he said, awkwardly. "I came to look after a pipe I thought I'd left here."

"I saw you taking care of them," was the reply.

There was a pause, during which Miss Tyrell took a seat and, folding her hands in her lap, gazed at him with the calm gaze which comes of perfect misdoing and the feminine determination not to own up to it. The room was no longer shabby, and Fraser was conscious of a strange exaltation.

"I understood that you had given notice in the City," he said, slowly; "but I'm very glad that you didn't."

Miss Tyrell shook her head, and stooping down adjusted the fire-stove ornament.

"Didn't you intend to go?" repeated the tactful seaman.

"I'd left it open," said Miss Tyrell, thoughtfully; "I hadn't definitely accepted Captain Martin's invitation. You jump at conclusions so, but of course when I found that Captain Flower had shipped before the mast for my sake, why, I *had* to go."

"So you had," said Fraser, staring.

"There was no help for it," continued Miss Tyrell.

"Didn't seem like it," said the more accurate Fraser.

His head was in a whirl, and he tried vainly to think of the exact terms in which she had announced her intention to emigrate, and combated the objections which he thought himself justified in advancing. He began to remember in a misty, uncertain fashion that they were somewhat vague and disjointed, and for one brief moment he wondered whether she had ever had any idea of going at all. One glance at the small figure of probity opposite was enough, and he repelled the idea as unworthy.

"I believe that you are sorry I didn't go," said Poppy, suddenly.

"I'm sorry for Flower," said the other.

"He will be back in six or seven months," said Poppy, gently; "that will soon pass away. I shall not be very old to marry even then. Perhaps it is all for the best—I don't like——"

"Don't like?" prompted Fraser.

"Don't like to be hurried," continued Miss Tyrell, looking down.

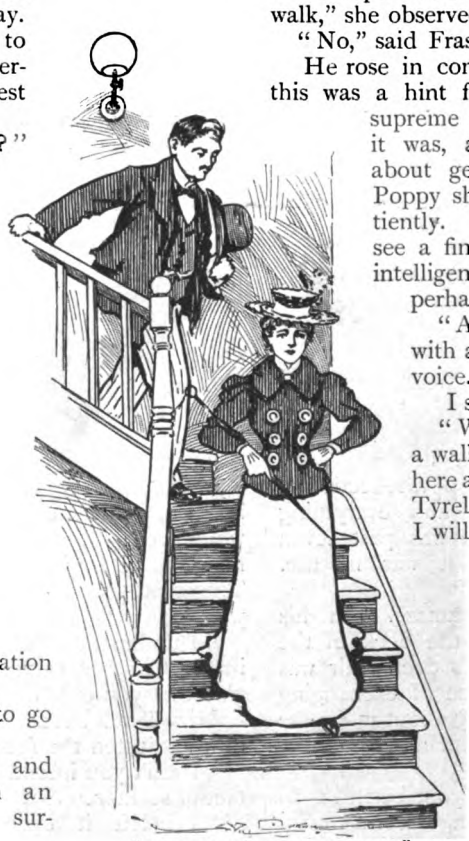
There was another pause. The girl got up and, walking to the window, gazed out upon the street.

"There is a nice air in the streets now," she said at length, without turning round.

Fraser started. Politeness and inclination fought with conscience. The allies won, but inclination got none of the credit.

"Would you care to go for a walk?" he asked.

Miss Tyrell turned, and regarded him with an unmistakable air of surprise.



"SHE LED THE WAY DOWNSTAIRS."

"No, thank you," she said, in a manner which indicated reproof.

Fraser shifted restlessly. "I thought that was what you meant," he said, indignantly.

"You jump at conclusions, as I said before," remarked Miss Tyrell. "It wouldn't be right."

"I don't see any harm in it," said Fraser, stoutly; "we've been before, and Flower knows of it."

The girl shook her head. "No," she said, firmly.

To her surprise, that ended the matter. The rattle of traffic and the hum of voices came in at the open window; the room seemed unwontedly quiet by contrast. Miss Tyrell sat reaping the empty reward of virtue, and bestowing occasional glances on the fine specimen of marine obtuseness in the arm-chair.

"I hope that I am not keeping *you* from a walk," she observed, at length.

"No," said Fraser.

He rose in confusion, wondering whether this was a hint for him to go, and after a supreme mental effort decided that it was, and murmured something about getting back to the ship. Poppy shook hands with him patiently. It is always a sad thing to see a fine young man lacking in intelligence. Some of her pity perhaps showed in her eyes.

"Are you going?" she asked, with a shade of surprise in her voice.

I suppose so," he murmured.

"Which means that you want a walk, but don't like leaving me here alone, I suppose," said Miss Tyrell, resignedly. "Very well, I will come."

She left him for a moment in search of her hat, and then, putting aside the gloves she was about to don in favour of those he had endeavoured to secrete, led the way downstairs. Her composure was sufficient for two, which was just the quantity required at that moment.

(To be continued.)

Peculiar Pets.

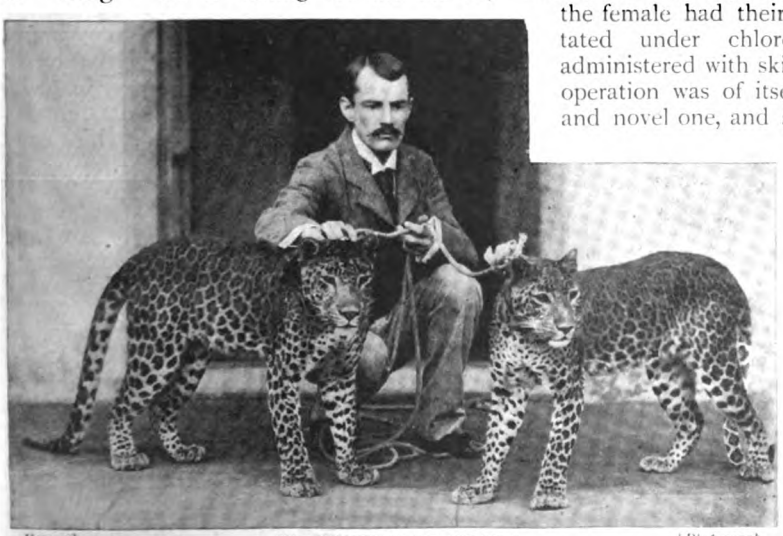
By Albert H. Broadwell.

THERE are few readers of The Strand Magazine who cannot recall to-day the valued friendship of a certain dumb creature into whose ready ears the little troubles and worries of child-life were poured: a little creature that never denied the truth of all we said and that quickly recognised the injustice of all things—with a hasty lick or, maybe, a friendly scratch. Times change, however, and as the little Briton as he was then grows bigger—mostly in his own estimation—he travels, and in his travels he gathers pets for the folks at home. Some thrive exceedingly well, others perish in the attempt; but there are enough outlandish pets that have been the joy of their owners to illustrate an article which is intended to show how easily the most unlikely animals and reptiles will become staunch friends of man when sufficient patience and perseverance, not unmixed with kindness—and sometimes punishment—are called into requisition.

From a "KING," IN HIS MASTER'S ARM-CHAIR. [*Photograph.*

Fancy finding a full-grown leopard sitting in your favourite arm-chair upon your return home—in that very arm-chair where peaceful pussy should be curled up in sleep; yet look at "King"—he is waiting for his master, Mr. J. Arnold Wallinger, of the Bombay District Police, Ahmedabad, India. Speaking on the subject of his pets, Mr. Wallinger very naturally grows enthusiastic. He has an interesting story to tell.

"My pets," he says, "are extraordinarily tame, a fact which is due to an operation performed on them by me. When about twelve months old, first the male and then the female had their canine teeth amputated under chloroform, which was administered with skilled assistance. The operation was of itself a very interesting and novel one, and showed among other things that the use of a saw was inadvisable, as the outer enamel was too hard. In consequence of this initial error in the choice of a suitable operating instrument the male was under the influence of the drug for a long period, subsequently necessitating artificial respi-



From a MR. WALLINGER AND HIS PETS. [*Photograph.*

ALGY: "UM, UM—THAT'S NICE!"
From a Photograph.

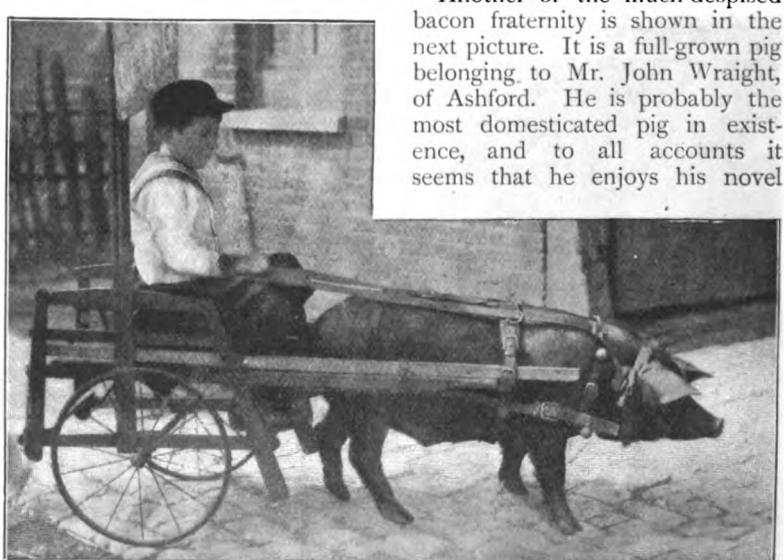
ration and the administration of strong stimulants under obviously difficult conditions. In the case of the female a file was used with far greater ease and less expenditure of time. The animals, even when so young, were very powerful, and had to be bound by slip knots previously arranged and held in position by men specially appointed.

"The men who have constant dealings with these two panthers treat them almost as if they were dogs. Since the operation referred to no accident of any kind has taken place. At first they were extremely timid, and would when frightened scratch and give small wounds. Before the operation, however, King had developed a tendency to stalk animals and boys, of which it was not possible to break him. On one occasion a boy, who came into the garden for the first time as a labourer, seeing the panther, bolted, and, partly in play and partly in earnest, the panther gave chase. The boy fell, and the panther cub, seeing the opportunity, was on top of him like a knife, and had inflicted wounds on the back of the neck with his unamputated canine teeth before assistance could be rendered. After this event it was necessary to thrash the animal unmercifully, and subsequently, as already related, his canine teeth were removed and his claws were burnt down periodically with a hot iron.

"My pets are fed on cooked meat once daily, and starved once a week to keep them in good condition. During the hot months King has displayed a great partiality for the luxuries of a cold bath. With this object he will quietly step into an ordinary zinc tub and remain there until cooled. It is a well-known fact that these feline species object to water, and the exception in King's case is somewhat extraordinary. 'Queen' is no exception to the ordinary rule, and objects to water strongly. The clever photos. of my pets were taken with great difficulty by Mr. A. R. Kavde, of Ahmedabad."

From leopards to pigs seems a big drop. Yet as regards strangeness in the taste for pets there is but little to choose. Algernon, or "Algy," is a pig that weighed a fraction over a pound at the time the photo. was taken. That he takes kindly to the bottle you will observe; his eyes are closed, and it is doubtful whether the discharge of a cannon beside him would have interrupted the succulent meal. Nothing could be more expressive of thorough enjoyment than the little one's actions and position when feeding hard. It shuts its eyes, stands on its toes, and, oh! doesn't its little tail quiver with ecstasy!

Another of the much-despised bacon fraternity is shown in the next picture. It is a full-grown pig belonging to Mr. John Wraight, of Ashford. He is probably the most domesticated pig in existence, and to all accounts it seems that he enjoys his novel



From a Photo. by] A STRANGE CONVEYANCE. *[Hugh Penfold.*

occupation thoroughly well. The strange conveyance shown in the photograph may frequently be seen, driven by its plucky little owner, as proud as any peer of the realm behind his four-in-hand in the park.

I wonder what masters of hounds think of this. Here is their arch-enemy chained like any common dog to a private kennel.

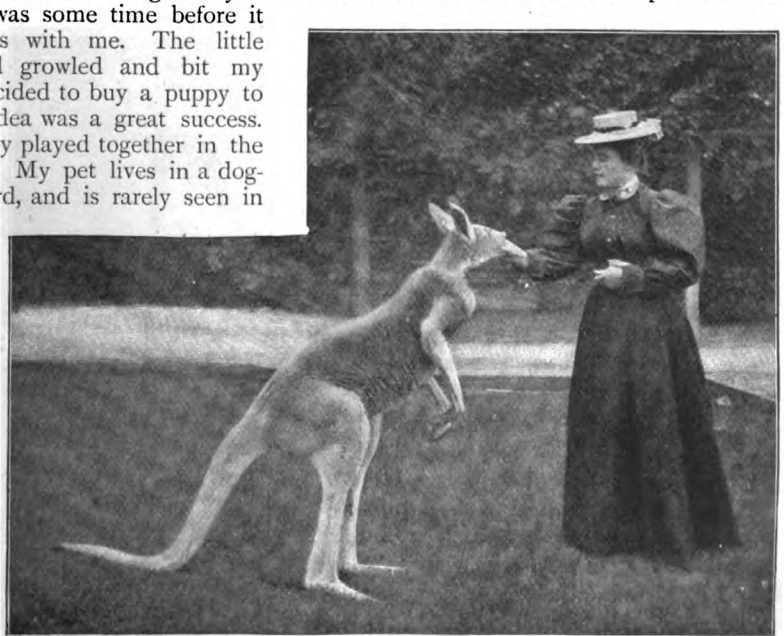
From a] A PET FOX. *[Photograph.*

Mrs. G. Clarke, of Barley Hill, Chard, the proud owner of this strange pet, says in her interesting letter :—

"Having had a pet fox some time ago, which unfortunately got away and was killed by hounds, I had a great desire for another, and one day last spring a farmer brought me a vixen cub about six weeks old. He took it out of the pocket of his shooting-coat just like a kitten, but it was some time before it would make friends with me. The little rascal snapped and growled and bit my fingers, so that I decided to buy a puppy to rear with it. This idea was a great success. The vixen and puppy played together in the greatest friendship. My pet lives in a dog-kennel in the orchard, and is rarely seen in the daytime, but as soon as it is dusk out she comes and runs round and round her kennel, and plays about and digs in the turf at the end of her chain; she has made a trench 6in. deep, in which she hides when she hears anyone coming. She will allow no one but my husband and myself to touch her at all, and she can quite distinguish between the sound of our footsteps and those of others.

"We feed her together with the dog on the scraps from the house, bones, bread and milk, and occasionally a small bird or raw meat. Strangely enough, she especially delights in the fried bacon left over from breakfast. She is in grand condition, fat and sleek, with a beautiful coat and brush, and it is wonderful how the ruddy colours of her coat harmonize with the grass and dead leaves, so that she can hide herself on a comparatively bare piece of ground, lying quite flat with her pointed ears laid back, so that she might easily escape being seen by anyone although passing quite close. We do not often venture to let her loose, but have done so occasionally, when she strongly resents being chained up again."

Above all animals, one would hardly expect to find amiableness in a kangaroo. Yet Mrs. Elitch, who, it may be remarked, owns a remarkable collection of wild and curious animals in Denver, Col., U.S.A., has found it possible to make a pet of this animal. Her private zoo boasted of two of these quadrupeds, and everything went on well until one of them suddenly died. It is a known fact that they rarely thrive alone, and Mrs. Elitch feared that her kangaroo would grieve himself to death through the loss of his mate. To distract his attention as much as possible she



From a Photo. by] GREAT FRIENDS. *[Jones & Lehman, Denver, Col.*

A PET OSTRICH.
From a Photo. by Jones & Lehman, Denver, Col.

used to give him some dainty morsels in the nature of candy, etc., and talk to him for hours at a time. After a long time she succeeded in making quite a pet of the sorrow-stricken kangaroo, and, strange to say, the animal is never so happy as when he hears his mistress's voice, for he at once realizes that he will shortly be the recipient of some tasty tit-bit, as well as come in for a good share of petting. That this extraordinary pet has got over the loss of its mate is well evidenced in our photograph, and it is undoubtedly a fine specimen of this strange yet interesting animal.

Our next illustration depicts another peculiar pet—an ostrich. Not only is this bird very tame and tractable in the hands of its owner, but it also deserves our attention as being the only pacing ostrich owned by a woman. Its mistress, the owner of the kangaroo, is seen in the photograph with her pet. She frequently uses the animal for driving about her grounds. It is hitched on to a very light fancy trotting cart fitted with pneumatic tyres. To be successful in driving such a queer steed no little amount of tact and patience is required. In the first place one cannot use ordinary reins, for were they pulled too tightly they would probably break the animal's neck, and the only way to guide him is to hit him with a long whip on the opposite side to that which you want him to go. Unfortunately, too, one blow is not always sufficient, and as the animal goes like the wind, you cannot depend upon this kind of "horse" to turn at a moment's notice. Then there is the possibility of his catching sight of a piece of orange peel, or something equally attractive. If he does he will stop in his fastest gait and dive sideways for it, often giving the driver a very unpleasant jerk. Mrs. Elitch has had the animal in her possession since it was quite a baby, which explains to a large extent its tractable nature. It is regarded as a fine specimen of the ostrich, is very powerful, and never seems to get tired.

In the Berlin Zoological Gardens there are many instances of the affection that exists so frequently between the animal and man, or rather, perhaps we might say in this instance, between the animal and woman. The orang is not usually considered to be a creature overflowing with the milk of human kindness, but even he

INSEPARABLES.
From a Photo. by Zander & Labisch, Berlin.

is apt to fall under Una's gentle influence, and to suffer himself to be led by the silken thread. Our friend in the photograph has taken a great fancy to his companion, a pretty German widow, and, if the remark may be permitted, he is an animal of taste. As soon as the lady pays her usual visit to the gardens, Mr. Orang runs to meet her, tenderly embraces the fair visitor, and tries his best to overcome the difficulties presented by the difference of tongues. When with her he is always amiable, gentle, and loving, an example much to be commended. Visitors to the gardens should certainly pay their respects to this representative of an ancient and honourable race, and they will find the courteous Herr Direktor always ready to place his store of knowledge at their disposal.

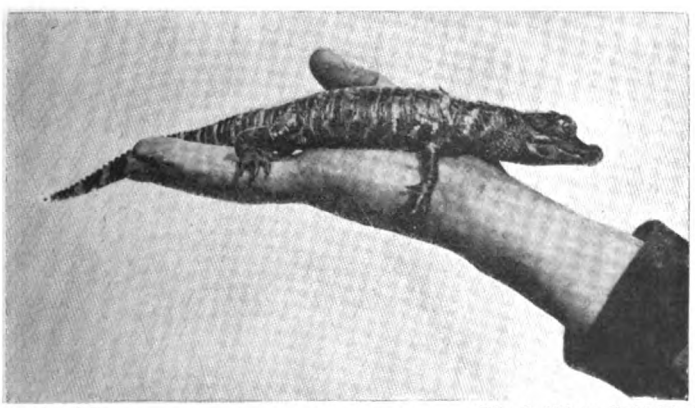
From a] A POISONOUS PET. *[Photograph.*

Trooper E. J. Cullen, C.M.B., of Colesburg, Cape Colony, has a pet with fangs, and poisonous fangs, too. He makes a speciality of snakes, and tames his pets by kindness. Nor does he seem to fare badly. Trooper Cullen's pet is a night adder, and it seems a terrible risk for a man to thus fondle a deadly snake, be it even in broad daylight.

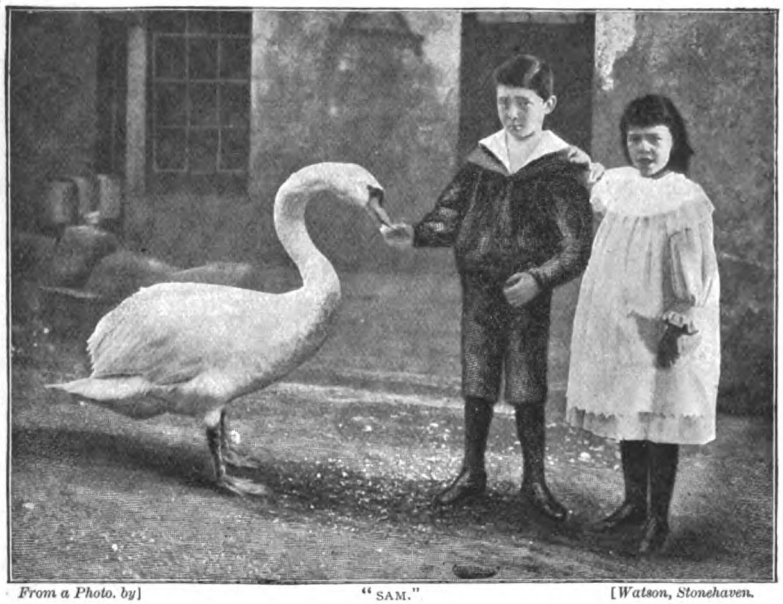
Fancy carrying about with you a baby alligator. Yet Baron de Longueil brought this strange pet with him from Florida. So far it has resisted the change of climate, and takes its warm bath three times a day with evident enjoyment. It is fed on small pieces of raw meat every two days. When not intimidated by the presence of strangers it will croak gently in answer to its name. The little creature knows its master quite well, and habitually travels snugly ensconced in his coat-pocket.

The next photograph shows "Sam," a pet swan, taking his breakfast from his little master's hand. Sam was brought up in a garden at the back of an hotel in Reading, Berks, where he was the pet of the proprietor. This gentleman being a great lover of wild creatures had many of his pets running loose in the garden, and Sam's chief delight seemed to consist in chasing them around the garden should they dare to approach near his own particular retreat under a tree at the edge of a small piece of ornamental water. He would also sit for hours under a fountain in his little lake taking shower baths.

Living with other tame pets, Sam soon learnt to follow his master and mistress round the garden for a piece of cake or some other delicacy, which he would take quite gently from their hands. At every meal-time Sam comes round to the back door and



From a Photo. by] A BABY CROCODILE. *[Miss R. Atkinson, Rockfairie, Pitlochry.*



From a Photo. by] "SAM." *[Watson, Stonehaven.*

knocks with his bill till his youthful master brings him his food. Sam is also very particular how his food is given to him: he seems to consider it quite *infra dig.* to stoop to pick up anything from the ground, and unless his master is there to give him food from his own hand, he takes his meals as though he were conferring a great favour.

Mr. G. W. Mathieson, of Chicago, the owner of the curious pet that follows, says: "This is probably the only domesticated wild cat in the world. He has perfect liberty of my suite of offices, where he is kept as a pet, and he goes the round of my rooms very much the same as any other domestic cat. We run a little printing establishment here, and he lies on the imposing-table, desk, and chairs, purrs, and rubs himself joyfully against us just as any other common or garden cat would do. He took the first prize gold medal at the Chicago Cat Show, and won a handsome Japanese vase, being voted the most popular cat at the show! There is something distinctly humorous in a wild cat being voted the most popular cat in a show. A wild cat —B-r-r!

Perhaps one of the most interesting photographs of our series is that of the genet which is in the possession of a Bedford lady. It was brought from Africa by her son when two or three months old. It is now a little over seven months. When he first had it, it was very wild and seemed untamable, biting viciously with teeth like pins, that drew blood immediately. However, patience and a little chastisement now and then worked wonders. It is now almost as tame as a cat, and will allow most people to touch it gently, but strangers have to beware of its teeth. It has many of the peculiarities of the cat, but at the same time resembles in some respects the kangaroo as regards its

From a] A PET WILD CAT. *[Photograph.*

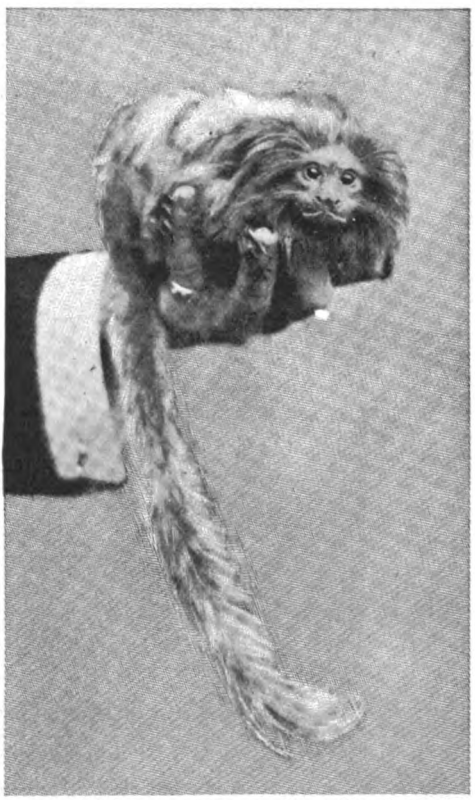
From a Photo. by] A GENET. [*J. A. Reid, Bedford.*

front and hind legs, the former being far shorter than the latter. It stands and runs also in a similar manner. Another peculiarity is the different sounds it makes, quite unlike any cat, one being a kind of cluck, cluck, but difficult to imitate. The quaint little beast is pathetically fond of its affectionate mistress.

Mouse deer would seem ideal pets, and the one shown here is by far the smallest of its tribe. The specimen, a photograph of which we give here, weighed 13½oz. when caught, and belongs to Mrs. Maxwell Maynard, of Mysore, India. She fed it on milk and water, and petted it constantly. Mrs. Maynard says: "My strange friend is now perfectly tame, and is not in captivity in any way. It goes out in the jungle as soon as it gets dark, and remains out all night, but never fails to put in an appearance at my bedside for early tea in the morning, and usually spends most of the remainder of the day in the bungalow. When this photo. was taken the pretty little creature weighed only 4½lb. and was about three-quarters grown.

From a] A MOUSE DEER. [*Photograph.*

"Macacca," the beautiful little "Marikina"



From a Photo. by] "MACACCA." [*Geo. Newnes, Ltd.*

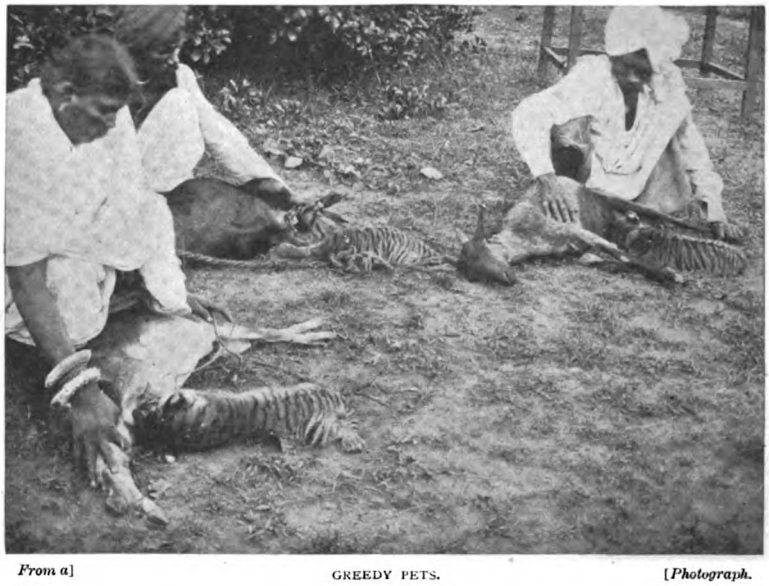
monkey here reproduced, belongs to Mr. H. Neville Davis. She is a little lady, and so highly civilized has she become that she would not think of getting out of her bed in the morning without her usual cup of hot tea, well sweetened, after which she will whistle for some sponge-cake and jam, and should anyone substitute marmalade she will immediately throw it at the offender.

Macacca thinks nothing of going through a dinner of six courses, with a little Madeira to finish up with. Her head is no

larger than a walnut, but she easily finds room for the whole of a large hothouse grape in her mouth at a time, carefully throwing away the skin and pips. This tiny creature has not the slightest fear of anything canine, and on several occasions when a small toy bull-terrier was placed on a table with her she simply stood up and gently pushed the dog away. Macacca weighs only 14½oz., and her tail is nearly three times the length of her body. Her coat, which is of the finest hair, varies in colour according to season. In the summer months it is a bright golden colour which might be envied by many a woman, the tail being silvery and as bushy as a squirrel's.

Mr. Hoggan writes a most interesting letter, which we quote in full :—

"While out tiger hunting last March near Chota Nagpur, my shikari discovered three tiger cubs in a cave. Their fond parent fled on my approach with a rifle. I sat near the cave all day, in a burning sun, waiting her return, but she failed to put in an appearance. Fearing the tigress would carry off her precious darlings at night—there was no moon to enable me to sit up—I took away the cubs, which were successfully reared by three goats, shown in the photograph. The unwilling foster-mothers were very much frightened of their strange children at first, but latterly got quite attached to them.



From a] GREEDY PETS. [*Photograph.*

She will often sit in the sunshine making a peculiar singing noise, not unlike the song of the thrush, and appears to be talking to the birds around her. This remarkable little animal displays a gentleness towards babies and little children which is extraordinary. Any little baby might caress and fondle her as though she were a doll, but let an adult attempt to do the same in the child's presence, and she will swear in the most comical manner.

Many of our readers will no doubt have seen tiger cubs in menageries and other places, but only a very few have had an opportunity of seeing anything so pathetic as is shown in the picture which follows. They are the newly acquired pets of Lieutenant S. P. Hoggan, of the Welsh Regiment. Tiger cubs are the prettiest and nicest pets I have ever had. Three jolly little chaps they are."

Mrs. Herbert Vivian, whose photograph we are privileged in reproducing, possesses what appears to us to be the most desirable pet of all. It is a gazelle, and one of the prettiest creatures imaginable. Mrs. Vivian is, of course, extremely fond of her charming pet. She calls it her "dear gazelle," and has very kindly given us the following interesting particulars.

"One of the favourite games of my wicked little friend is to come behind a very solemn parlourmaid and suddenly tug at the streamers of her cap when she is most rigidly upon her dignity. He has much curiosity about new forms of food, and

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PET.
From a Photo. by Henry Spink, Brighton.

when I am at breakfast he thinks it a great joke to creep up suddenly behind me and stuff his nose into my plate or both forelegs into my tea-cup. If there is a great upset he is vastly amused, and trots about the room with his head in the air, convinced that he has done an exceedingly clever thing.

"Another of his diversions is to go under the table at meal-times and quietly bite all my bootlaces in two. He will often leave them hanging by a thread, so that when I get into the street they will all burst simultaneously. He will also lick all the blacking off, so that the boots appear as if one had been walking through a river. When he is affectionately disposed he puts up his nose and sniffs my face with great diligence—this is his idea of kissing; whilst he cannot bear to be left alone for an instant, and directly I get up to leave the room he makes a point of trotting out after me.

"However sleepy he may be in the evening he is always averse from being taken off to his rug in the scullery, and directly he is let out in the morning he rushes off and scratches at my bedroom door imploring admission. As he has taken so extremely well to his life in England, and is adored by everyone who sees him, I can only wonder how it is that people in this country do not more often import gazelles as pets. No doubt they require a great deal of patience, but their inexhaustible charms afford an ample return for the expenditure entailed."

Here is yet a third specimen of the bacon fraternity. This extraordinary animal belonged to the Misses Wilder, of Braemar, Tunbridge Wells. Miss L. Wilder has been kind enough to supply us with particulars of this affectionate creature, and her letter makes interesting reading. We are sorry that owing to piggy's death this interesting record has to be moulded now in the past tense: "'Bijou' was given to us three years ago when only seven days old; she was brought up by hand, and lived for the first twelve months in the house; she would follow us about, up and down stairs, came for long walks, and often enjoyed a drive, when she would sit on my lap. No one looked after Bijou but myself; she was very clean and most intelligent, and understood almost everything; her coat was very long and curly, and of a gold-yellow colour, with black about the legs; she

From a] THE UGLIEST PET. *[Photograph.*

A WILD MOUNTAIN GOAT.
From a Photo. by George P. Wells, Palliser, B.C.

was groomed daily, and when young was also washed every day, her food consisting of bread and milk, or cake and sweets. The last few months she was given a little meal and water, but she was quite thin. Bijou went in harness also, and often would draw my second brother about the lanes. Poor Bijou died this autumn. She was three and a half years old."

The next pet under consideration is a wild mountain goat. At least it was wild once, but is fairly tame now, as can be seen from its extraordinary position — archly perched on the back of its owner, Mr. J. Lalloutagne, of Golden, B.C. This affectionate Billy was captured when a few days old, and brought up with the assistance of a bottle, and is now about six months old. It is so clever that it might almost become a circus goat, for we understand that its accomplishments are nothing short of marvellous, so much so, in fact, that its owner has over and over again refused an offer of 100dols. (£20) for this remarkable little rascal.

Last, but not least, comes a pretty picture of a little girl driving her pet bear cubs across the snows of Arctic Russia. We are indebted to Mr. A. Montifiore Brice for the photo. of this unique team. These pretty pets are brown Russian bears, which had been caught young and trained in the manner shown. By using arguments of many kinds the owner trains them to pull a small sledge, and he frequently drove in it over the great mantle of unbroken snow which for six months and more covers the land in those parts. So tame, indeed, did the bears become that he was at last able to allow a little friend, the daughter of a Russian lady, to drive them about the country, and even across the great River Dwina, which flows into the tempestuous and icy White Sea in the summer, and in the winter forms a temporary high road and a bridge between one half of the country and the other. It is a pretty picture, and one of the most original illustrations of what may be done with peculiar pets, if sufficient patience and good will are called into play.

From a] MY LADY OF THE SNOWS. *[Photograph.*

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

IV.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THE DISSOLUTION.

THE Angel of Death hovers over the House of Commons. You can almost hear the rustling of its wings. Of course, there is no statutory reason why the present Parliament should be dissolved this year. As far as precedent goes, it might, without reproach, continue its existence through next Session, the General Election taking place at some convenient time after harvest. The Parliament which, for the first time, saw Disraeli in power as well as in office, meeting on the 21st of February, 1874, ran through six years and sixty-seven days. Only twice in the Queen's long reign has that record been beaten. In both cases it was—rare coincidence—exceeded by the same number of days. The Parliament the Queen found at work when she came to the Throne placed Lord Melbourne in power in the year 1835. It sat for six years and 141 days, an accomplishment precisely paralleled by the last Parliament over which Lord Palmerston presided.

The Parliament of 1880-5, the thin-spun thread of its life nipped by what Mr. Chamberlain, before he reached a period of grace, called "The Stop-Gap Government," did not survive for quite six years. The Unionist Parliament of 1886 exceeded that term by fifteen days. On the 1st of July next year the full term of six years' office will have been enjoyed by the present Ministry. If a General Election does not take place till September or October of next year, Lord Salisbury and his colleagues cannot be reproached for unduly lingering on the stage.

A LESSON FROM THE PAST.

But will they play the game so low? The shade of Lord Beaconsfield seems to forbid it. There is little doubt that had he dissolved Parliament immediately after his return from Berlin arm-in-arm with Lord Salisbury, bringing Peace with Honour, he would have obtained a triumphantly renewed lease of power. He hesitated, and was lost. Lulled into false security by the blustering popularity of the hour, the Beaconsfield Ministry held on, to face the fearful rout that befell them in the spring of 1880.

History is, to a marked extent, repeating itself in the cases of Lord Salisbury's Government in the year 1900 and Lord Beaconsfield's in the year 1878. Early in the present Session, Lord Salisbury in one House and Mr. Arthur Balfour in the other will be able to announce a peace not only with honour, but with substantial profit. The hour will seem to have struck when appeal should be made to the nation for a vote of confidence. Apart from the glamour of success of British arms in South Africa, Ministers have no reason to believe that this time next year, or eighteen months hence, they will be in a stronger position than they will find themselves in the early spring. The odds are in favour of their being much worse off. To begin with, two more Sessions will appreciably increase the natural impatience, not to say the loathing, with which after the first year of office the British elector regards the Ministry of the day. Beyond this is the ordinary risk of unforeseen disaster or unpremeditated blunder.

To dissolve Parliament next month means the sacrifice, unnecessary as far as law and custom go, of fully eighteen months' tenure of office. To some cautious Ministers it may seem that, after all, a year in the hand, with salaries paid quarterly, power, patronage, and the patriotic duty performed of keeping out the wicked Liberals, is worth more than six years in the bush. That is exactly the sentiment that fatally prevailed in Lord Beaconsfield's Cabinet after the return from Berlin in 1878.

PILING UP DEBT.

There is a special reason likely to weigh with Ministers in deciding on the problem of the date of Dissolution. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach is not lacking in courage. But he may well shrink from the duty of facing preparation of the Budget for the financial year that closes on the 31st of March. None better than he knows what a millstone the finance of the last four years has fashioned for hapless Chancellors of the Exchequer in the opening years of the new century. What with the relief of the clergy, subvention of Church schools, and large transference to the Imperial Exchequer of rates hitherto chiefly borne by the landlords, the national expenditure has permanently increased by many millions. Added to these drafts on the pocket of the taxpayer are the enormous additions made during the last few years to the expenses of the Army and Navy.

AN UNPLEASANT PROSPECT FOR THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

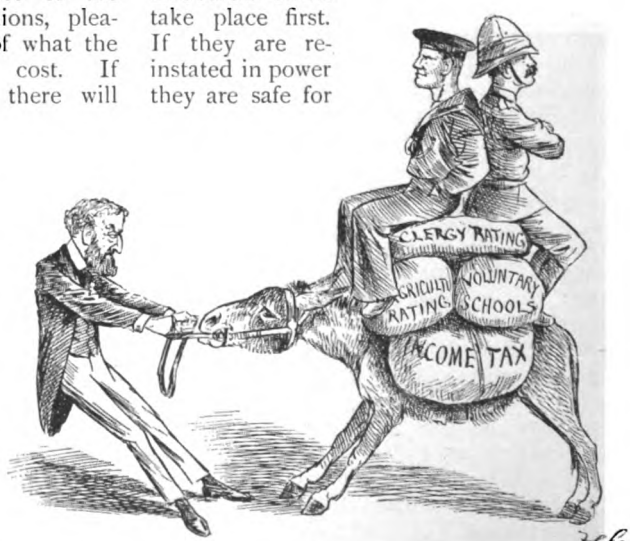
These influences were at work before war broke out in the Transvaal. Already a little bill of ten millions has been accepted on that particular account, seven-tenths of it raised by the alluring device of borrowing on Treasury bills. But, on obtaining the sanction of the House of Commons for this transaction, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was, above all things, insistent that this addition to the floating debt should be regarded as temporary. "I hope," he said, "no one will suggest that this is a case in which war expenditure should be provided for by a permanent addition to the debt of the country." This bill of ten millions, pleasantly rotund, is but a fraction of what the campaign in South Africa will cost. If it turn out to be only one-half, there will be ground for congratulation. The prudent taxpayer will be disposed to contemplate its being trebled. Of course, there will be a war indemnity from the Transvaal. As the Chancellor of the Exchequer put it in the speech already quoted from, "Under a pure and honest Government it will be perfectly possible for the Transvaal, not only to bear the ordinary expenses of government, but to provide a reasonable sum towards the expenses of the war, consistently with a reduction in the taxation of the goldfields."

Supposing this forecast is fully realized we might count the British share of contribution to the war cheque at the ten millions already voted, but not met out of taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is pledged to make such provision in the Budget to be introduced two months hence.

A SHILLING INCOME-TAX.

For the Income-tax payer there was an ominous note in the speech. Sir Michael plainly declared that the existence of an eightpenny Income-tax would not deter him from increasing the impost. "However high the Income-tax may stand," he said, "it will be the duty of the Income-tax payer to take his full share in providing for such additional expenditure in common with the other taxpayers in the country." That plainly means anything from an additional twopence to a supplementary fourpence in the pound.

A shilling Income-tax, in addition to innumerable rates and the pressure of indirect taxation, is nothing when you are used to it. When the Crimean War broke out the Income-tax was simply doubled, being raised at a stroke from sevenpence to one shilling and twopence. In 1855 it was further raised to one shilling and fourpence, and so remained for a couple of years. In Pitt's time Income-tax for a long time stood at two shillings in the pound. All the same, if the most unpopular of taxes, pressing directly on a wide range of electors, must needs be increased at a time when a General Election is imminent, Ministers, being only human, will naturally prefer that the General Election shall take place first. If they are reinstated in power they are safe for



HEAVILY LADEN.

another five or six years, and need fear no man. If they are beaten, and the Opposition come in, they have the double satisfaction of having a heavy burden removed from their shoulders, and of seeing the triumphant adversary, on the very threshold of his career, hampered by a load of debt, and made unpopular by the necessity of increasing taxation in order to meet applications he, when in Opposition, strenuously fought against.

THE CUCKOO TRICK.

For this and other reasons indicated it is at least on the cards that the month of March will see a Dissolution sprung on the constituencies.

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.

The first Session of what some people venture to regard as the new century does not differ from its predecessors in the matter of the Queen's Speech and debate on the Address. It will not be forgotten how narrow was the risk of deprivation of this privilege run by an indifferent Empire. When, last October, Parliament met for the War Session it was with avowed intention of making it the starting-point of the business Session of this year. The brief Queen's Speech then read was to serve all purposes. There would be no second edition when Parliament re-assembled in the new year. Consequently there would be no debate in reply to the gracious communication.

That is a course of procedure for which there are those precedents dear to the heart of the Constitutional member. Quotation of one will suffice to show how the thing works. On the 5th of December, 1878, Parliament was summoned to vote the money needed in connection with the war in Afghanistan. The Queen's Speech, as happened in the War Session of last autumn, dealt exclusively with the one matter in hand. On the 17th of December the sittings were adjourned till the 13th of February, 1879. There being no Queen's Speech, Lord Beaconsfield in one House and Sir Stafford Northcote in the other indicated, as the Premier put it, "the measures which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been recommended to your notice in the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the present Session."

IN DAYS OF YORE.

Sentiment apart, and regarding Parliament as a business assembly, that seems a commendable procedure. It contrasts with a performance well enough at the time it was devised, but something of an anachronism in the altered conditions of the day. Time was, within the present reign, when it was the regular custom of the Sovereign to open Parliament in person. The ceremonial being carried out with the pomp and circumstance pertaining to Royalty, it was proper that Parliament should make attempt to live up to it, at least for the day. Therefore, we had in both Houses members, arrayed in military or naval costume, echoing through a painfully prepared oration the often bald phrases of the most gracious Speech.

That is called moving the Address. In either House the Leader of the Opposition followed, protesting in solemn voice that never since the days of Demosthenes had there been a speech equal in point and polish to those just delivered by the flustered gentlemen in unaccustomed uniforms, painfully conscious of a sword with a tendency to get between their legs if they indulged in freedom of action. The Leader of the House followed, gravely capping the compliment. If the Opposition meant business the Leader would conclude with an amendment to the Address, equivalent to a vote of censure on the Government. At such crises debate might go on for two or even three nights. If the Opposition did not feel themselves strong enough to challenge the existence of the Ministry the Address was usually voted before dinner, the business of the Session commencing at the next sitting.

TO-DAY.

The Irish members changed all that. When, in 1875, they, under the impulse of Mr. Parnell, began to feel their feet, they discovered the rich and rare opportunities for obstruction provided by the antique ceremonial of moving the Address. From the opening of the Session of 1876 began a new era, which has since prevailed, with the result that in these times Ministers think themselves fortunate if not more than the first ten days of

the freshest period of the Session are appropriated for the delivery of miscellaneous speeches, styled, with grim humour, "debate on the Address."

It was prospect of this opportunity being shut off at the commencement of the new Session that led to the storm before which Mr. Arthur Balfour shrank abashed. To men properly jealous of the privileges of the Mother of Parliaments there was something shocking in the prospect of cutting off Mr. Dillon, Mr. Caldwell, Dr. Clark, Mr. W. Redmond, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, and eke Mr. Weir from opportunity of discoursing at length under favour of an amendment to the Address. To tell the truth, the privilege safeguarded, the House does not show itself tumultuously anxious to benefit by its exercise. The statesmen mentioned have grown too familiar with the spectacle of members rising with one accord and hurriedly quitting the House when they take the floor. Nevertheless, the ancient custom, flourishing, as we have seen, under wholly different circumstances, must not be touched by sacrilegious hands.

"MR. ARTHUR BALFOUR SHRANK ABASHED."

WORTH THINKING ABOUT.

Still, something may be whispered in favour of the course following on the Autumn Sessions of 1867 and 1878. If it were, as was wont, the custom of the Sovereign to open Parliament in person, reading the Speech from the Throne, the accessories of the pageant would be well enough. But no one can aver that there is anything dignified or useful in the spectacle of half-a-dozen elderly gentlemen, styled Lords Commissioners, masquerading in scarlet ermine-trimmed gowns, with cocked hats, sitting all in a row on a bench. Nor are the speeches of the uniformed mover and seconder of the Address anything but sheer waste of time. A detailed statement and elucidation of the business programme of the Session, given by the responsible Minister, confronting either House is preferable to the document which sets forth the Queen's Speech, not always in the Queen's English. The statement made, and commented upon from various points of view, the House might, as it did in February, 1879, forthwith get about its appointed work, the development of which through succeeding stages of Bills supplies abundant opportunity for saying all that is really useful to say on the public questions of the day.

SHEPHERD AND SHEEP.

On the eve of the opening of the Session good Conservatives are, with quickened interest, asking each other whether, as heretofore, they shall in party strife receive the valuable assistance of their friend the enemy. As far as numbers count, Liberals in the House of Commons are in a hopeless minority. But because a minority is numerically insignificant it by no means follows that it shall be politically impotent. Proof of this assertion is found in the case of Mr. Parnell, who through successive Sessions, with a following of between sixty and eighty, practically dominated the House of Commons. Another even more striking case is furnished by the Fourth Party. Four strong, counting the desultory mustering of Mr. Arthur Balfour, they were mainly instrumental in transforming into a minority Mr. Gladstone's magnificent majority won at the polls in 1880. But these two factions, great and small, always pulled together, sinking individual prejudices, animosities, and opinions in the common movement.

HISTORIC CABALS.

With Liberals in the House of Commons, whether in power or opposition, similar instinct and habit do not prevail. It was sadly rather than bitterly said by a great Liberal Leader: "When the constituencies have gone the right way, returning the Liberals to power by a commanding majority, the very first thing members composing it set their hands to do is to break it up."

That is a hard saying, but modern history supplies abundant proof of its accuracy. It was the dwellers in the Cave of Adullam, dug on the Liberal side of the House, that wrecked the Reform Bill of 1866. It was the Tea Room Cabal against the Dublin University Bill, led by Mr. Miall, that brought about Mr. Gladstone's defeat and resignation in

March, 1873. It was desertion and active hostility on the Bradlaugh question that in the first Session of the 1880 Parliament gave a powerful Ministry a shock from which it never recovered. It was the great secession of Liberals on the Home Rule question that hurled Mr. Gladstone from power in 1886, and drove the party into the wilderness where it still forlornly strays. It was the Welsh Radical members who made impossible the Government of Lord Rosebery. It was enemies within the gate who, according to the testimony of Sir William Harcourt, elbowed him out of the leadership of the party when in opposition.

THE CASE OF C.-B.

Doubtless bearing these matters in mind, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, receiving at the Reform Club meeting a unanimous call to the Leadership, in succession

THE ONLY SAFE PLACE (FROM THE MINISTERIAL POINT OF VIEW).

to Sir William Harcourt, timidly expressed a hope that, at least upon points of procedure not involving great issues, the party would submit to their leader's judgment. Of course it was not contemplated that on issues affecting great principles a man's conscience should be suborned in the interests of party solidarity. Sir Henry is not Naaman that he should plead for indulgence if from motives of policy he were constrained to bow himself in the House of Rimmon. He simply meant that for the sake of the party itself he should not be habitually subjected, as Sir William Harcourt was, and as was not unknown in the experience of Mr. Gladstone, to having his advice on immaterial matters flouted and his authority lowered in the eyes of the House and the world.

How this appeal prospered the records of the first Session of last year testify. To quote three instances that recur to the mind: On the 1st of May, the Old Age Pension Committee having been selected in the ordinary manner by consultation and agreement between the Whips of the two parties, its nomination was moved from the Treasury Bench. Objection to its constitution was taken by some members of the Opposition Benches, and in two divisions the Leader found himself opposed in the Division Lobby by a section of his following. On the 19th of June Mr. Balfour made the customary motion appropriating for the remainder of the Session Tuesdays and Wednesdays for Government business. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, speaking in his official capacity, unreservedly admitted the reasonableness of the demand. It being opposed from below the gangway to the point of a division, the Leader of the Opposition, amid ironical cheers from the delighted Ministerialists, walked out of the House, a number of his nominal supporters going into the "No" lobby. On the 3rd of July conversation arose on a resolution affecting the settlement of the Niger territory. A Blue-book fully recording the history of the case was at the printers, and issue was promised in a few days. Mr. Balfour made the not unreasonable suggestion that it would be better to postpone discussion till the Blue-book was circulated, when members would be in full possession of the facts. The Leader of the Opposition, a plain business man, having secured a pledge that the papers should be immediately forthcoming, assented. Whereupon his followers below the gangway moved to report progress, insisted upon taking a division, and drove their leader into the Government lobby.

HOW LONG! HOW LONG!

It will be seen from consideration of these modern instances that there was at stake no question of principle or conscience. The mutiny in face of the enemy was due to pure cussedness. To some minds it will appear that the trifling nature of the quarrel adds to the seriousness of the situation. For petty, wilful insubordination no excuse can be found in the conduct of the Captain. Bubbling with good humour, always urbane, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman has upon meet occasion shown that these qualities are not incompatible with fighting force. In varying circumstances he has displayed a born genius for filling a thankless post. He has known when to speak and, more priceless gift, has

A DIFFICULT MOUNT.

known when to be silent. In accepting the arduous, thankless task of leading a Liberal minority in the House of Commons he, animated by a sense of duty and loyalty, made infinite sacrifice of personal ease and comfort. It is a poor reward to find himself publicly flouted by a section of his nominal followers, however insignificant in numbers or inconsiderable in personal position.

"TAKE CARE OF DOWB."

This is a watchword that still lives in political commentary, though it is not so frequently dragged in as it used to be. I wonder how many men of the present generation know its history? I confess I did not till I learned it sitting at the feet of that vivacious chronicler, Sir Algernon West.

Sir Algernon, at that time fresh home from a visit to the Crimea, remembers sitting under the gallery of the House of Commons when Sir de Lacy Evans expounded the riddle to puzzled members. Upon the death of Lord Raglan, General Simpson, second in command, received from Lord Panmure, then War Minister, the following message: "You are appointed Commander-in-Chief in the Crimea. Take care of Dowb." Sir de Lacy Evans, who was with the General when the telegram arrived, gave a racy description of the scene. The staff called in to assist in solving the mystery were utterly at sea. Officers of the Engineers were summoned with unavailing inquiry as to what part of the trenches Dowb might be serving his country in.

At length there flashed upon one of the staff recollection that Lord Panmure had at the seat of war a cousin named Dowbeggin. At this great crisis in the campaign, the Commander-in-Chief dead, a new man selected to succeed him, the cousinly heart of the Minister of War was touched by the opportunity of serving his kinsman. Over land and sea he cabled, at his country's expense: "Take care of Dowbeggin." The economical operator cut the name short after the fourth letter. Thus it came to pass that the nation was enriched with the canny aphorism, "Take care of Dowb."

Lord Panmure must have been a peculiarly stupid man even for the governing class that came to the front at the epoch of the Crimean War. The late Lord Malmesbury had a delightful story about him, current on the authority of that charming lady, Mrs. Norton. When the pathetic remnant of veterans came home from the Crimea on the conclusion of peace the Queen reviewed them. After the ceremony Mrs. Norton asked Lord Panmure: "Was the Queen touched?" "Bless my soul, no!" said the Secretary of State for War, horrified at suggestion of such indiscretion. "She had a brass railing before her, and no one could touch her." "I mean," said Mrs. Norton, hurriedly, "was she moved?" "Moved!" cried Lord Panmure, beginning to think much gadding about had made Mrs. Norton mad. "She had no occasion to move."

Here the conversation terminated.

SIR ALGERNON WEST.

By Basil Marnan.

I.

WHEN Lucette was seven years old her father, Captain Heriault, received orders to hold himself in readiness to depart with his company for frontier service in Algeria.

Captain Heriault, when the decision was finally arrived at, felt more secret misgivings than he cared to show. For Lucie, his wife, had scoffed at the idea of remaining at home. Was she not a soldier's daughter, born herself to the blast of bugles, in the travail of a nation's agony, that dread year when the Prussian heel ground the soul and soil of France? From the first moment she had made up her mind to go with him, and who shall gainsay the will of a loving woman? Once that point was decided, it never even occurred to either of them to leave Lucette behind. With the memory of their little one dragging them ever homewards life would have been intolerable. The mignon face, framed in its black, silken, curly locks; the scarlet, merry rippling of the demure lips; the loving depths of the grave eyes that, solemn or smiling, shone as the golden stars shine as in a deep black well; the dainty, graceful child-form—all that and each detail of it to be haunting them reproachfully across a thousand miles of sea! Impossible! And so they went, braving the rough journey, the rougher fare, the long, scorching stretches of sand that blistered eyes and lips, and made even the tough camels look dirtier and more dismal. But even the journey had some compensations, and all her life Lucie remembered the deep peace and joy of the breathless halts at moonlight beneath sweet-smelling clusters of palms, where the wind crooned like a softly-touched lute in the cool wiry grass and drooping fronds. There was the breath, too, of a heavenly vigour in the rosy dawns, with the sky like a great coral fan flashing dew and wind in the red rising cheeks of old Sol.

Even when they arrived at last at El Beida and took up their quarters the actuality was not so bad as it might have been painted by anyone inclined to indulge in grumbling. Certainly the first two nights were somewhat terrible, passed as they were in the small, stinking village, with its mud walls and square mud houses, hot with the baking sultriness of pestilential air. In fact, it was due to the vileness and danger of the odours of this Arab village that Captain Heriault moved his troops under canvas with a promptitude hastened by considerations of the dangers to his wife and child.

It was surprising how soon the little company ran entrenchments round their cluster of tents, and looking over the mud wall across the gaping ditch Lucie felt a certain sense of relief. For after all the thought of a night attack in unprotected tents is not very conducive to sleep.

As it was, the precaution proved well

timed, for the very day of its completion saw the horizon blotched with little black specks that, like spiders floating on a one-hair web, bobbed up and down the grey, quivering sky. Armand Heriault seemed rather disturbed when the news reached him. His consigne was to wait at El Beida till the column moved up, and in the meantime to reconnoitre a hundred or so miles south and east of the Dulad Nayl Mountains, collect provisions, and learn the movements of that unruly horde of Bedouins the expedition had it in mind to tame. It did not surprise him that these hawk-eyed, vulture-nosed children of Mahomet should know of his presence. But it was quite out of his calculations to reckon with any such large force as that growing, dancing blotch on the horizon seemed to indicate. It was with a thrill of glorious fear that Lucie, holding her daughter by the hand, watched her husband with some sixty of his men sweep out about noon towards the approaching natives. Yet when the sunlight suddenly rippled like the crest of a broken wave on the swift slant of the hostile lances as the Arabs dashed forward to the charge, the woman felt half ashamed of the pallor that smote her cheeks. For Lucette, her hands clenched, her little toes trembling with excitement as she craned over the rampart, her face and eyes flushed with the spirit of battle, was shrieking shrill "Vivas" in whose wild, exultant assurance of faith no tremor of fear ran. And when the clash came, and for a moment the blue tunics were enveloped in a cloud of white, only to emerge again in two minutes, scattering right and left the broken line of the enemy, it was Lucette who, defying all commands, scrambled over and through the ditch, and raced to meet the flashing sabres and galloping steeds of her countrymen.

Armand Heriault hardly drew rein as his eyes met the child-gaze blazing into his, but, bending low, he swung her as he passed on to his saddle-bow, leading her thus to camp to the ringing cheers of his men.

"A wandering band, my little one; nothing more!" he said, later, in answer to his wife's anxious inquiries. "Scouting they are, perhaps, and probably many leagues from their main body. We shall have no trouble with them now, and in a week the column will be here."

Yet when the next day came and the sentinels looked out through the sinuous, parting curtains of the morning mist, a sight met their astonished gaze that later brought their captain running from his tent and blanched the blood on a cheek that till then had never known fear. For there, around them, not a half a mile distant, in unbroken circle, lay a host of Bedouin warriors, their white tents and piled arms gleaming greyly in the misty light. For long he stood there counting the tents, reckoning gloomily the numbers of his own little troop, and cursing softly the assassins who made their war plans, with brains fuddled by incapacity and politics, in the cafés and theatres of Paris.

When he turned at last it was to meet the eyes of Lucette, who, in night-gown and slippers, had followed him unobserved.

"It is splendid!" she said, clapping her hands. "You will kill them all, is it not, my father, and be made a general? And when the President sees you at the review you will point to me and say, 'My little girl was there and saw it all and cheered, and handed the flag to Sergeant Aubin with her own hands.'"

Armand looked on her for a moment with a vague wonder in his eyes. Then he caught her suddenly to his breast, straining her to him till she cried out. And Lucette for the rest of the day wondered very much indeed what it was that made a round hot drop of rain fall from the blue sky on to her face as her father put her down.

II.

FIVE days had gone by—five days of war and savage defence and sortie, and vigil more wearing than a hundred battles. Each day the captain's field-glasses had swept a dozen times an hour to the east. But he only saw there the rolling brassy glare of wave on wave of sand—never the glint of gun-metal, the moving cloud of plumes and gleams and golden dust with bands of dusky blue between.

It was the day of their last rations. To-morrow they would have not one crust of bread, not one thimbleful of meal. The stores he had collected in the fourteen days he had been there were all piled in the Arab village three-quarters of a mile away. In vain had he led twenty desperate sallies in the attempt to gain or snatch at those bags of grain and meal, directing his four machine-guns to cover the attempt.

The Arabs had laughed at his hail of bullets, and time by time his men had grown fewer, till for the last three days he had not dared venture another sortie. They had been braves, these fellows of his, fighting like

demons, with tight belts round empty stomachs, and faces grey with powder and rigid with the passion of despair. But they had grown wofully thin, and as he glanced at the muster this fifth day, he turned his head aside quickly. Thirty, perhaps, in all! And out of a hundred and twenty! And out of the thirty, hardly one that had not some bloody bandage round head or arm. There was only one face on all that parade that was not grimly set as their captain, pushing his horse forward, began to speak. And as he spoke, even into that child face there grew a look of puzzled gravity, of disappointed surprise.

"THEIR CAPTAIN, PUSHING HIS HORSE FORWARD, BEGAN TO SPEAK."

It was an impressive scene in the early morning light. Thirty rigid figures, grimy with the stain of war, sitting at attention on horses that stood as if carved in bronze, their faces gazing, expressionless, at the square of white tranquil tents, at the door of one of which stood Lucie and her daughter. At their backs the trenches, battered, in places half broken. Here and there the guns mounted, pointed, ready at an instant's warning. Around them, silent as a host of phantoms, five or six thousand reckless Arabs waiting for their doom; and beyond, the sullen coppery glare of mile after mile of sand pricked to a thousand sparks of light as the sun's rays smote laterally along its rolling distances. And between them and the tents the solitary figure of their captain, grey and haggard of face, spare of form, but with a dull fire burning still in his deep blue eyes.

"My friends," said their captain, shortly, "we have no more rations. To stay here is to die. I am going to take you through the enemy. If any escape, let him seek the column and tell the General how we did our duty. If I fall, I commend to each the care of my wife and child."

Ten minutes later the gates were thrown back and the troop rode forth, Lucie and Lucette in their midst. Their plan of action was simply to deceive the enemy into the belief that they meditated their usual sortie, and when the Bedouins diverged towards the village to wheel to the north and make a dash through the thinned lines. Hardly had they dashed out than a horde of warriors poured from the lines to the right and left, one half directing themselves on the village, the remainder as usual on the camp, with the intent to cut off the re-entry. When they had covered half a mile the northern line of investment had melted away. Heriault, seizing the moment, wheeled his troop and dashed forward. The success of the manœuvre was indisputable. By the time they had reached the tents they had half a mile start of the enemy, with only a handful of surprised Arabs in their path. On these Armand charged, his long sword sweeping right and left, and behind him thundered the troop. But even as they passed, a chance spear from a falling native caught Heriault full

in the chest, hurling him from his horse. In a moment the only ensign left reined in his horse and vaulted to the ground. Quick as he was, however, he was not quicker than Lucie and her daughter, nor was he so lucky. For even as he reached the ground a dying Bedouin grasping at the colours he held ran him through the heart with a final thrust of his long, broken spear. The ensign, beating the air wildly, fell headlong on his foe, his head buried in the folds of the flag.

It was at that moment that Lucette saw him. Her mother was already kneeling by Armand's side. Around them were only the dead and dying, and thundering towards them the pursuing Bedouins. Into the fierce little soul of Lucette a great rage sprang. She leapt to the ensign's side and tore the flag from his stiffening fingers. Then waving it aloft her tones rang out in a shrill treble :—

"*A moi! A moi! Pour la patrie et mon père!*"

Already the flying line of her countrymen had slackened and halted. At the cry they wheeled and came thundering back, their bodies bent low in the saddles, their faces lit with the grim smile of men who know they are going to their death. And half-way to the childish form standing under their flag they met it. The Bedouins, sweeping in on them, at a hoarse yell from their leader parted into two waves, and enveloped the little troop, bearing it onwards, broken, scattered, defiant, and fighting to the last.

Their deed of butchery done, they swept back again. Lucie was still kneeling over her husband's body, as if to protect it with her own. Lucette had moved now to his head, and, with hands defiantly upbearing the colours, with face blanched and rigid, but with eyes bright and fearless still, stood waiting what might come. As the white-gowned horde galloped up a cluster of lances were directed against the two.

But again the same hoarse voice arose :—

"Hurt them not! To my tent with both man and woman!" and as the aged Sheik rode past he cast a keen look on the two that somehow brought almost a smile to Lucette's tightly clenched lips. Then the wave of men parted and passed them, a shower of golden dust blinded their eyes, and next moment they were lifted on to horses, and were moving quietly by the side of the wounded man towards the Bedouin tents.

"POUR LA PATRIE ET MON PÈRE!"

III.

SOME two hours later Lucette and her mother, the latter with her wrists crossed and bound, stood facing the man who had bidden their lives to be spared.

The Sheik, Ali Moussa, was a fine-looking man of some fifty years of age, though his silvery beard and hair made him look older. His snowy turban and long, flowing robe lent him a peaceful appearance not at all in accordance with the warlike glitter in his eyes as he had led the charge that morning. Yet as his black eyes roamed over Lucie she felt herself growing hot. Uncomfortable memories of tales floated into her mind—tales of European women

immured in Arab harems safely locked in the heart of the vast desert. Some such thought was probably running in the Sheik's mind too, and his brow wrinkled as he glanced at the child.

Suddenly a thought came into the mother's mind, a thought that made the blood creep in a dull flush to her face. She cast a glance at the Sheik and another of swift apprehension around. The guards who had brought her in were at the doorway. The Sheik himself was sitting on a mat, one hand resting on his sword, the other holding a cake of meal smeared with fat and salt, from which he every now and then broke a morsel and slowly ate it. An earthen jug of water was on the ground at his hand, and at his elbow a young guard stood, rigid and motionless.

"SHE STOLE A STEP NEARER THE SHEIK."

Lucie's eyes gleamed, and she hid the fire she felt smarting them with her long lashes. Yet through that cunning veil she saw, as women can, that the Sheik's eyes were downcast and that he appeared deep in reverie.

"Lucette," she breathed.

The child's eyes flashed on her a mute inquiry.

"If that man," she whispered—and her voice was like the rustle of a breeze on soft leaves—"gives me some of his cake, we shall save father's life."

Lucette's head barely nodded, but her eyes suddenly became glued on the cake.

"I am going to ask him," murmured on the mother. "If he refuses, snatch it from him, take a bite yourself, and lift it up to me for one. You must be very quick. You are not afraid?"

The child's eyes gleamed up one dancing glance on her mother. She stole a step nearer the Sheik, keeping her gaze fixed on the guard at his elbow.

"What say you to the child?" demanded the Sheik, suddenly lifting his head and fixing his black, peering eyes on Lucie. He had four wives himself, and the ways of women were not strange to him.

Lucie trembled, and her voice had a curious quiver in it as she answered, "I am hungry! I said to her that it would be good if my lord gave me of his cake to eat."

The Sheik allowed a grim grin to wrinkle his features.

"Ye cannot eat of my salt," he answered, and then, after a pause, added the words "as yet. But food shall be given you."

He nodded to the guard at his elbow, and the man withdrew. It was Lucette's opportunity, and she seized it.

"You are a very greedy man!" she cried, in the pure, sing-song Arabic she had learnt from her nurse, and with a lightning-like swiftness her lithe young body lanced out on him. Before he could even realize her intention she had grabbed the cake from his hand, leapt back, stuffed a piece between her cherry lips, and passed it instantly up to her mother's mouth.

For a moment the Sheik stood dumfounded. Then with a muttered growl of rage he lifted his sword and was about to drive it through the child, when Lucie flung herself bodily on him, her bound hands clinging frantically to his arm.

"We have eaten of thy salt," she cried, "and our blood is sacred. If thou so much as liftest thy hand against us the curse of

Allah and thy people will brand thee dishonoured for ever."

The Sheik's arm dropped, and he looked at the woman's pleading, flushed face, and his eyes dropped away furtively, sombrely. She looked very lovely, and he realized that a great and perhaps unique opportunity had been wrested from him the moment he had it in his grasp. Then a thin smile crept reluctantly for an instant round his stern old lips and wrinkled eyes.

He put the woman from him with a sigh of regret. Her fairness would have shown as a pearl in the distant oasis where was his home. But Allah ordered otherwise, and was not Allah all-wise? He beckoned the child to approach him. Lucette came fearlessly, a bright wonder in her eyes.

"Ye are my guests," he said, with a certain savage grandeur, "and all I have is yours. Ask, child! What thou wilt, thou shalt have!"

As he spoke he cut the bonds of the woman with his sword. Lucette fairly danced.

"I want the flag the men tore from me," she cried.

"Why?" asked the Sheik, fixing his eyes curiously on her.

"Because my dada," answered the child, drawing herself up, "says that the flag is La France, and if you kill our soldiers that doesn't matter, for France will send more to avenge them. But to lose the flag, that is dishonour, and he would not live if he knew it was lost."

"You shall have the flag," answered the Sheik, and with his own hands he took it from the wall of his tent and passed it gravely to her. She kissed it in a transport of joy.

"Shall I have my dada too?" she asked, looking up at him with eyes ablaze with exaltation and the joy of success.

The Sheik, looking on the radiant face with that gleam as of golden sunlight in the black, sparkling eyes, smiled again, and laid his hand tenderly on the silken, rumpled locks.

"Thy father is thine," he said. "And thou art a daughter fitting so brave a warrior."

Lucette, with a shriek of joy, fairly leapt at the grizzled old warrior's neck, and for a moment the Sheik was wrapped in an embrace, in which the tricolour and a pair of sweet, fresh, ardent lips half smothered him. It was three days later when a little cavalcade, accompanied by bearers with a litter, halting at an oasis, saw in the glow of the setting sun a sudden glitter of blue tunics and the flicker and play of steel, whose wide extent told of an advancing column of some strength. For a moment the Sheik stood in the ruddy glow, shading his eyes with his hands. Then briefly commanding the horses to be saddled, he turned to Lucette.

"Fare thee well," he said. "Thy father will live, and where Ali Moussa, the Sheik, is, there he shall pass as my own mother, even though his own hand be raised to strike my head. A daughter of my tribe thou art, and if thou wilt come with me I will make thee a princess of ten thousand fighting men."

Lucette's eyes kindled as she looked from her father to him. Then they shone through a sudden mist of tears, and her voice trembled as she shook her head.

"You are a nice old man," she said, generously. "But I love my dada, and some day when he is general he will command twice ten thousand fighting men."

For a moment the Sheik's eyes danced, then he turned sombrely and without another word galloped off, and in three minutes was lost in a whirl of sand as he and his companions sought again their desert homes.

Two hours later, around the litter of the wounded captain, a group of admiring officers drew rein, listening to Madame Heriault's tale as she pointed, now to the flag, now to the shrinking figure of her daughter.

"Ah, yes," she concluded, "it is all true, my General. It is I who tell it to you. It was she who saved the colours, before she thought of her father's life, risking her own for his honour. '*A moi, pour la patrie et mon père*,' she cried; and they fought, *mon Dieu*, how they fought to reach her! But they hadn't a chance. They were mown down fighting to the last. It was terrible, but it was grand."

"Thou art a brave, mignon!" said the grizzled old General, and his voice was curiously husky. As he spoke he stooped down and swung the child on to his saddle-bow.

"Thou art a brave!" he repeated, "and thou shalt wear this to show all men how brave hearts stick to their captain and their colours."

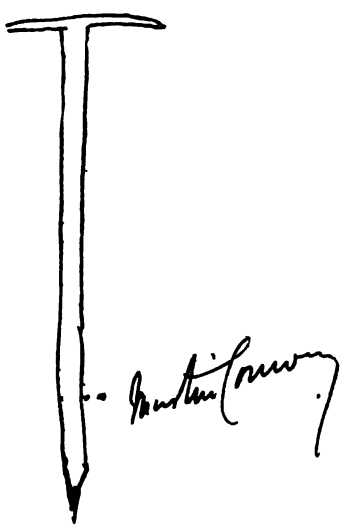
And taking the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour from his own breast he pinned it on to the child. And as Madame Heriault bent sobbing over her husband's hands, for all their discipline a mighty roar of delight and pride went up again and again from the dust-stained troops, as officer after officer, at a wave of their chief's hand, filed past that eager, radiant, flushed, exultant child-face, and gravely saluted a true daughter of La Belle France.

"A Penny for Your Thoughts!"

By Gertrude Bacon.

HOW often has each one of us been annoyed by that most aggravating and unmeaning phrase, "A penny for your thoughts," and how utterly impossible have we almost always found it to express in words the fleeting fancies of the brain, even if we have any inclination to do so for the sake of a hypothetical copper and the gratifying of mere idle curiosity!

Thoughts are proverbially hard to clothe in the restricting garments of language; a general drift there is and a special tendency which constitutes in the main the particular individuality and temperament of the thinker, and in this drift and tendency, if we could only attain to it, lies the surest and most unerring key to the character and personality of each one of us.



AN ICE-AXE.
BY SIR MARTIN CONWAY.

Though the tongue may not be able to give expression to the mind's general tendency, and to those thousand and one minute traits that go to make up an individuality, yet the pen frequently can, and, in fact, unconsciously does so. Witness the character revealed in handwriting, or so markedly manifest in the blindfold pigs which appeared in this Magazine a few months ago.

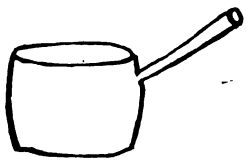
The idea suggested itself to the writer of undertaking a little investigation of her own which should have as its aim the unconscious self-delineation of character. This is an experiment which everyone can try for himself—not without amusement and instruction. It is, in fact, a kind of game. Request any person to make a rough sketch of the first object that comes into his mind, and you will be astonished to find how often in the choice of the object the character of the individual is displayed.

The plan adopted was to send to different individuals a request, similarly worded and inscribed, that they should draw in rough outline on a special sheet of paper inclosed—precisely similar in all cases—the first simple design that occurred to them; the intention being that in these ideas, pictorially rendered, called to the mind without consideration—mere idle fancies of the moment, but suggested in each case by the same circumstances—a true index to the personality of the artist might be obtained.

The request in the present instance was sent to leading men and women of thought and action, partly because of the greater general interest and our means of verifying results obtained; partly because their personalities are more worthy subject for inquiry than the most of us, and partly because of the ancient saying that "great minds think alike." The experiment has met with the most generous assistance from the majority to whom the bold request was made, and the ready kindness and courtesy of the distinguished ladies and gentlemen who have co-operated will be widely appreciated by our readers.

First on our list comes the bold sketch of Sir Martin Conway, the great mountaineer; and who will question the appropriateness of an ice-axe to the man who first succeeded in crossing the desolate, snow-covered bogs of Spitzbergen, and who has gone farther than anybody towards the conquering of the unconquerable Himalayas? When Sir Martin

is not actually on a mountain or an Arctic glacier he is ever thinking of them. He has been higher up in the world in a literal sense than man has ever been yet except in balloons. He is the hero of two hundred peaks and of countless adventures and hair-breadth escapes among the heights he loves so well. To climb is to him what to walk is to ordinary mortals, and it is just as certain that it would occur to him on the spur of the moment to draw an ice-axe or similar mountaineering tool, in the bold, swift way that stamps his personality, as that if placed at the foot of an hitherto inaccessible crag he would find his way to the top.



A SAUCEPAN.
BY MRS. STEEL.

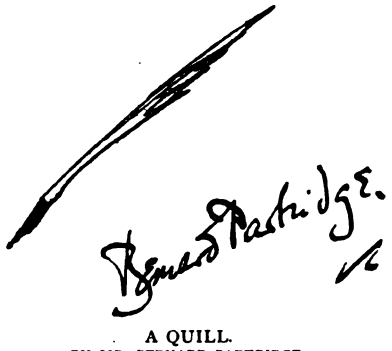
Less obvious at first sight, but in reality equally easy of interpretation, is the neatly executed saucepan drawn by Mrs. Steel. The talented authoress of "On the Face of the Waters" stands in the very forefront of living women writers. Alike in the stirring scenes of the great Mutiny, and in the tender pathos and wonderful insight into native character of "In the Permanent Way" and similar stories, she has shown her great literary genius, and in the fame of her novels it has come to be almost forgotten that the second book she ever published was one on Indian cookery. Cooking is still to her a favourite relaxation, and shares with music, singing, painting, the moments she devotes to recreation. It is therefore in every way appropriate and natural that a culinary implement should first suggest itself to her.

The observation has been lately made by a well-known editor and writer for the popular Press that the finest training for the journalist is a thorough grounding in Euclid and Algebra. "A man who has mastered his Euclid," he says, "will always write with a purpose; he will set out from a certain place and arrive at the destination he had in view when he started. He will treat any subject in an orderly and intelligent manner." The converse is equally true. The man who can arrange his thoughts and words in clear and logical treatment, can accurately gauge the importance of each point and knit his facts into an harmonious and well-balanced whole, will not only make a successful author or lecturer if his bent lies that way, but he will also, whether he know it or not, be possessed of a mathematical brain, and geometrical reasoning will present no difficulty to him.

That such a well-known writer and lecturer as Dr. Andrew Wilson, then, should have contributed a triangle to our collection is in keeping with the fitness of things. But there is more reason than this. Dr. Wilson is much more than a mere journalist or popular instructor. He is a physician, a physiologist, a science worker and evolutionist. His methods—as those of all true scientists — are inductive, progressive, and orderly. From one train of reasoning he will deduce another; one fact will lead him on by due sequence to the next, and though he may never (though this is unlikely) have proved a proposition of Euclid in his life or solved an equation, the power is there nevertheless and the trick of the brain.

A TRIANGLE.
BY DR. ANDREW WILSON.

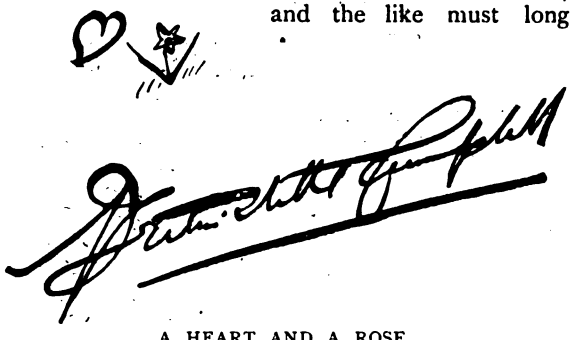
Mr. Bernard Partridge has drawn us a life-like representation of a quill pen. The superiority of the drawing alone shows the artist, and for the man who can wield his pen more deftly than the majority of his countrymen, the grey goose-quill is exceedingly apt. Not that we would have it believed that Mr. Partridge purposely drew



A QUILL.
BY MR. BERNARD PARTRIDGE.

a pen because he knew it to be appropriate to him. The unexpected request to draw something on the spur of the moment would almost infallibly have prompted his mind and hand to the execution of a sketch bearing on his two great natural gifts —drawing and acting—for he plays a double *rôle*. His clever black and white sketches and his inimitable contributions to *Punch* bring to Mr. Bernard Partridge honour and renown enough to satisfy most men; but the unstinted praise bestowed on the delightful acting of Mr. Bernard Gould has also to be added to his account. There are few, indeed, who have thus the opportunity and ability for living, as it were, a double life, and distinguishing themselves so greatly in either. Perhaps the fact that the graphic side of his personality lent itself more easily to pictorial illustration somewhat influenced Mr. Partridge in choosing his design. Certain it is that the genius of the actor is perhaps less open than any other to symbolic representation.

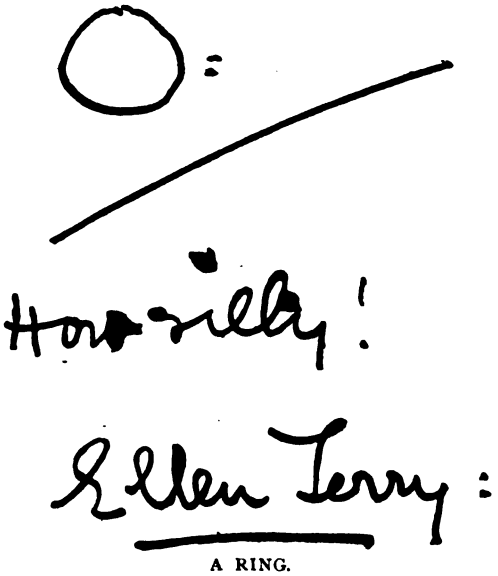
And this will explain the reason why the sketches drawn by two great past-mistresses of the art are at first sight somewhat difficult to interpret. Designers of drop scenes, theatrical embellishments, and the like must long



A HEART AND A ROSE.
BY MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL.

have felt the scantiness and inappropriateness of the conventional emblems supposed to typify the stage. A horrible arrangement of masks, grinning insanely for comedy, and decidedly ghastly for tragedy, is generally the best that they can manage, and poor at that. Ancient Grecians must certainly have spoiled their noble dramas by their masks, and now the very name to us only conjures up visions of noisy little boys and Guy Fawkes' celebrations. The fact is that since in itself the stage comprises everything, since its function is to mirror the whole range of human life, there can necessarily exist no one symbol which should be appropriate.

But if there were any emblems that could at all express a special sentiment attaching to the actor's art, and more especially appertaining to the actress's share, would not a heart, a flower, and a ring be among them? Whatever human passions are portrayed before the footlights, and in whatever guise they are presented, the "motif" of love is never absent. Miss Ellen Terry and Mrs. Patrick Campbell are called upon to interpret love in well-nigh every one of the hundreds of parts it falls to their lot to play with such consummate art. The latter has drawn a heart and a tiny blossom, and the former a ring, for the dash which separates it from her



A RING.
BY MISS ELLEN TERRY.

playful exclamation below is not to be taken as belonging to the design.

AN ANCHOR.
BY SIR CLEMENTS MARKHAM.

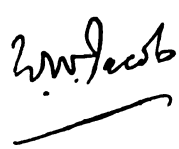
The next picture at least is not difficult to interpret. The distinguished President of the Royal Geographical Society has depicted an anchor. To test the appropriateness of his inspiration we will briefly call to mind the chief events of his stirring and useful career. He was born in Yorkshire, and at the age of fourteen entered the Royal Navy. Soon afterwards his ship was engaged in hunting the Riff pirates in the Mediterranean. A few years later he served in one of the Arctic expeditions in search of Sir John Franklin. In 1851 he became lieutenant, and then left the Service. For two years he travelled in Peru, later in India, where he introduced the cultivation of the cinchona plant. He was Secretary to the Royal Geographical Society for twenty-five years, received the gold medal on retirement, and has been President since 1894. He has published many books, including lives of great navigators and accounts of Arctic exploration. Comment here is unneeded. A man whose early education has been that of a sailor will never lose the maritime bias his mind has acquired, even when he has not constant association with all that is new and important in connection with marine exploration and enterprise to keep his interest fresh. In the case of the great geographer the strongest influences have been brought to bear, and his symbol is but the natural outcome of his upbringing and life's work.

SKETCH OF A HEAD.
BY MRS. NORMAND.

The beautiful and graceful head that Mrs. Normand (Henrietta Rae) has so kindly favoured us with also needs no explanation. It is the work of a true artist, and the few quick, vigorous lines are instinct with the genius which renders the pictures of Henrietta Rae so popular and so eagerly sought for in each succeeding Academy. As all lovers of her art are well aware, it is in the delineation of beautiful women that Mrs. Normand so greatly excels, and in her fancy of a moment she is true to her natural bent.

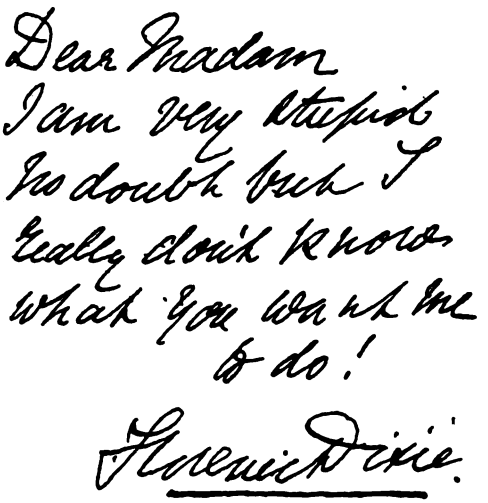
At first Mr. Jacobs's picture might seem capable of several interpretations. It is slightly suggestive of a flower-pot or of a vase, but on more careful inspection all doubt vanishes: the author of "A Master of Craft" has depicted a glass of grog! Now, Mr. Jacobs's special talent, which has given delight to such a vast circle of readers, lies in his unrivalled delineation, so humorous and yet so sympathetic, of a special class of working men who occupy their business in great waters. The loves, the woes, the wiles, of the skipper, the mate, the cook, "George," the boy, and the charming if wilful heroines, are described with a force and vividness that make one at once realize that they are no phantoms of his brain that Mr. Jacobs is depicting, but living human beings, actual flesh and blood — quaint, worthy, humorous, and, be it added, thirsty souls every one! Salt sea-breezes and hard lives are provocative of thirst, and the cheery glass that never comes amiss to Jack ashore or afloat is no unfitting emblem to be chosen off-hand by one who is Jack's historian and friend.

When Lady Florence Dixie afforded one more proof of



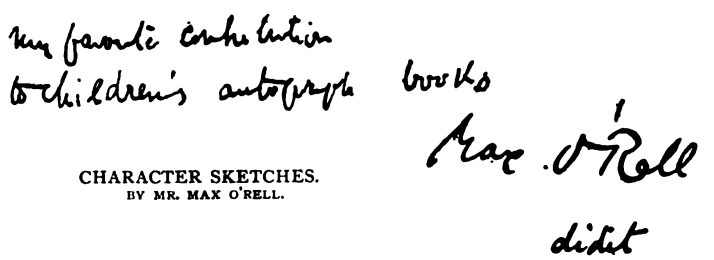
A GLASS OF GROG.
BY MR. W. W. JACOBS.

A SAVAGE WEAPON.
BY LADY FLORENCE DIXIE.



her never-failing kindness and condescension by acceding to the request made her, she wrote that she did not understand exactly what she was intended to do. Her drawing on this account, however, should not be considered as less conclusive; in fact, rather the other way. She had no chance of thinking out, perhaps half unconsciously, what would be an appropriate or easy subject. She must perforce have been guided by the whim of the moment. To few people have been vouchsafed the wide and varied experience with which this notable lady has filled her life. Perhaps her most remarkable achievements have been the exploration of the unknown wastes of that *terra incognita*, Patagonia, and her connection, as war correspondent and champion of Zulu rights, with the years of Boer and Zulu warfare. It is to one or other of these times that Lady Florence Dixie's mind has carried her back when she drew what is clearly a weapon of native warfare; one doubtless familiar to her in her famous travels.

When a delightful humorist—who has charmed us all by his witty home-thrusts and his clever, if supremely amusing, character sketching, in which he lays bare with kindly, genial touch the fads and foibles of the Anglo-Saxon race—draws for us on the spur of the moment two comic heads illustrative of two different types of humanity, we are not disposed to suggest that there is anything inappropriate about his choice. Our warmest thanks are due to Mr. Max O'Rell for giving this last conclusive touch to an experiment which has amply justified itself and proved successful almost beyond expectation.



CHARACTER SKETCHES.
BY MR. MAX O'RELL.

The Wee Romance of Mr. Fergus MacGregor

By R. E. Vernède.

MR. FERGUS MacGREGOR was a risen novelist. That is to say that, although but eight-and-twenty, he had just published his fourth novel, of which edition after edition was being sold, while even his three more juvenile productions had brought him money, and his publishers were willing—almost anxious—for more, notwithstanding the fact that Mr. MacGregror, being of the race which, since the time of Culloden Field, has been more successful than chivalrous, dealt with them in a manner calculated to profit the author not less than the publisher.

His novels were compact of heather and peat, which he loved, and of the romance that springs from killing people "for the sake o' somebody"—either a King or a lassie with lint-white locks—in the agreeable environment of blue-bells and haggis. His first book, it is true, dealt only with heather and trout and Scottish scenery, but with the infinite capacity for taking pains that had once caused his dominie to swish him on suspicion of being a genius, Mr. MacGregor had recognised that romance must accompany his future efforts. He found no difficulty in putting a claymore into his hero's hand in place of a fishing-rod, or in spilling on paper the blood of men rather than fish. The crux of romance to Mr. MacGregor was the inexorable necessity of a love interest. To tell the truth, while heather was almost second nature, and claymores could be studied with the dispassionate devotion of an archæologist, women were something different, and had not been revealed to him. Vaguely he knew that lassies did not always forego stockings, and could not all be placed in the category of "lint-white."

Mr. MacGregor reflected upon this obvious truth as he paced up and down the Edinburgh platform, waiting for the train that should take him to Paisley. Was not Miss Patsie Carrington, an English girl whom he had met, of quite a different colour? In effect, her hair was dark brown and she wore stockings—at least, she did at that rememberable ball in Edinburgh a few weeks ago when, as Mr. MacGregor stood shyly at the entrance to the hall, contemplating escape,

she had passed through the crowd of men with gay little bows and noddings, an admirable coquette, all robed in shining brown.

He had compared her in a ruminating, unimaginative way to a glossy brown sparrow that had attracted his attention in the forenoon as it hopped jauntily in the meadows, moving with cranings of the neck, provokingly restless, sucking sweet food from many grasses. Even so jauntily moved Miss Patsie Carrington, and sucked the honey of compliments from many men. He had felt the inadequacy of the comparison—had plucked up his courage, put on his gloves, begged a dance of her. She of her kindness had allowed him two, and had reeled before him angelically to the tune of the pipes.

Since that night, and particularly when he had met Miss Carrington, which, by a series of chances, had happened several times, strange thrills had possessed the marrow of Mr. MacGregor, and had distracted him from his former whole-hearted admiration of the heather. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that he had not made much progress in depicting heroines. He had honestly tried to show one true to life in his latest romance, which had been re-written in parts since the night of the ball. He had so far departed from his custom as to signify that the heroine's hair was of a dark brown texture; but, apart from this, he was conscious, as he paced the platform, that he had not greatly advanced.

It was impossible—quite impossible—that the Scottish hero, who, as usual, was to ride off and slaughter, should be subjected to a course of teasing and raillery from the heroine, even though her hair was of dark brown. And yet, for the sake of consistency, such indignities would inevitably befall the hero if Mr. MacGregor visualized Miss P. Carrington, and transferred her—life-size—as heroine to his pages. Such a course was not in keeping with the traditions of Scottish romance. Mr. MacGregor had endeavoured to drive the image of Miss Carrington from his head.

In despair, he had resorted to the plan pursued in his earlier novels, viz.: the hero had proposed in a few well-chosen words, and a quotation from the Latin, had been accepted—of course—whereupon by a few deft happenings (the sound of the pibroch, maybe, heard at night over the misty hills, or the news of the murder of his fourth cousin twice removed) he had been compelled to ride off upon his adventures, after imprinting an exceedingly chaste kiss (under the impression, apparently, that she had a headache) upon the heroine's brow. The lassie remained in peaceful retirement until chapter the last, when she emerged radiant at the return of the hero—to receive an account of his adventures and yet another kiss—as preventive against another headache.

The public had bought the book. Mr. MacGregor thought on this with a certain gloat of satisfaction. He was in such a state of exaltation that the lateness of the train did not disturb him. He stopped at the bookstall and bought a review to read on the journey. In the meantime, he turned to the literary pages and found his own book criticized. He read it with eagerness. It was favourable—distinctly; it noted his best passages—it even praised mediocre ones. What was this?—". . . unquickened part played by heroine—we should recommend the author the study of the difficult art of wooing before he gives us another heroine."

Mr. MacGregor closed the review with a frown. It was intolerable chatter! What business was it of this impertinent critic—more interested in domesticity than in literature—to cast reflections upon his heroine? Besides, was it such an unquickened part that the heroine played? She had the most pleasing maidenly propensities: the blush had grown on her shame-fast cheek when the hero put the question, and, with mild but amiable femininity, she had wept for a short time in his arms, calling him her own true lord and requesting him not to set out on adventures—as maidens will. Naturally, the hero had rebuked her with a quotation from the Greek—"Silence is the most seemly virtue of a woman"—and had made it clear that he loved honour more.

"Unquickened part?" Nonsense! She was a very reasonable heroine, fit mate for a Scot. No doubt other kinds of women did exist, but Mr. MacGregor painted what he knew—somebody comfortable and steadfast.

The image of Miss Carrington rose for a moment to the Novelist's mind, and seemed to justify the reviewer. But the Novelist put it from him. In any case, he would not have his novels overrun with the whims and caprices of some will-o'-the-wisp. He could conceive angels—only they must be in marble—winged, if you will, but statuesque, not flying through air elvishly.

The train fizzed into the station as Mr.

MacGregor came to this conclusion, and he hurried forward to secure a seat. Opening the door of the carriage that seemed to him emptiest, he found himself face to face with the only occupant—Miss Patsie Carrington.

"Eh? But it's you?" said the Novelist, elegantly, but in some confusion.

Miss Carrington bowed, and smiled upon him graciously.

"And wull ye be ganging to Paisley, Miss Carrington?" inquired the Novelist, all his previous displeasure forgotten.

"Yes," she said. "Shall I have the pleasure of your company as far as that?"

"Ye wull," said the Novelist. Polite dialogue is not the strongest feature of Scottish romance.

Miss Carrington bit her underlip for a moment, as though she had some difficulty in withholding a retort; but only a gleam of merriment came into her mischievous eyes, and, the train starting at the same moment, she sank back in her seat behind a novel.

Mr. MacGregor recognised it as a father might his child.

"Eh, but ye're reading ma book," he said, elated, but bashful.

"Your book!" said Miss Carrington, with apparent surprise, turning to the title-page.

"Ah'm thinking so," said the Novelist, modestly.

"I suppose," said Miss Carrington, slowly, "I suppose I ought to congratulate you on it. The critics seem to have done so. But"—she leant forward, with indignation in her tones—"do you really imagine a heroine could behave like that?"

"Eh?" said the Novelist, disconcerted. "Ma heroine? What'll be wrang with Maisie?"

Maisie was the name of the heroine.

"What will be wrong?" asked Miss Carrington, in deep scorn. "Do you suppose you are so—I mean, your hero is so — irresistible as to win a heroine's affections with a few pompous words and a quotation from the Latin? Do you imagine she would weep in your—I mean, his—arms and call you—him—her own true lord, whenever he went for a ride, and be as meek and mild and turnip-headed as a quarter-grown lamb? Had you really the impression that heroines watch for hours and rush out at the sound of a horse-hoof like infatuated rabbits, and all to be lectured in Greek? I don't know the woman——"

Miss Carrington sank back in her seat, exhausted by her vehement championship of the sex, and the Novelist scratched his head humbly. He was dimly trying to guess why Miss Carrington had taken so decided a dislike to his heroine.

"Ah'm thinking," he said at last, "aiblins ah'll not be denying, after all, that it's no so unlikely that——"

The glory of Lowland Scottish, as a language, is that it admits of infinite prevarication. No tongue can be adapted so to favour the unwilling witness and preserve him from precipitate perjury; no other is fitted so to distract the impatient cross-examiner, whether in the person of a bewigged counsel or a maiden with dark brown hair.

"——that it's no so unlikely"—went on Mr. MacGregor, feeling his way with superfluity of cunning—"that ma heroine could, under the progression of mair ordinair

"'WHAT WILL BE WRONG?' ASKED MISS CARRINGTON, IN DEEP SCORN."

circumstances, have been exheebited in a less secondary poseetion——"

"Indeed!" said Miss Carrington, loftily.

"And of a demeanour no so reticent," added the Novelist, willing to be as generous as circumstances permitted.

"I think, Mr. MacGregor"—Miss Carrington spoke with haughtiness—"you might be more straightforward in admitting that your heroine is a nonentity—simply a nonentity. Really, no better than Burns's mouse—

A wee stickit tim'rous cowrin' beestie.

And the hero is so terribly self-complacent."

"He'll be a lad of pairts, na dout," said the backward-driven Novelist, trying to regard this description of the hero as complimentary. "Ye'd no be desiring the twa of them to keep the front together?"

"I desire," said Miss Carrington, "that no novelist depict a woman until he has at least an elementary idea of what a woman is."

The severity of this criticism tongue-tied the Novelist during a short period, in which the train ran a monotonous mile or two, and Miss Carrington continued to read with a hypercritical smile of scorn upon her face. She liked the man—perhaps she did more than like him. But he had no business, even in a novel, to talk of love with such obtuse complacency, and lightly assume familiarity with that which she held sacred. So she read on, and let her scorn be visible.

The Novelist at first felt angry, and anger carries with it the conviction of unjust treatment; but this subsided gradually into an injured feeling, which amounts to an admission that there was some reason in the attack.

"And what like, if I may ask ye," said the Novelist, humbly, "would ye have the heroine to be?"

Miss Carrington looked up from her book with an air of tolerating the interruption, though she had forgotten the matter in hand.

"What like? Oh, the heroine? I am not a novelist, you see, Mr. MacGregor, and I do not know the limitations of your art. Am I to assume that you draw your characters from life, more or less?"

"It'll be an important adjunct," the Novelist conceded.

"In that case I—that is to say—a real heroine," Miss Carrington corrected her slip very hastily, "would be very different from yours. For instance, she would not for one moment endure a didactic lover. He'd have to come down off his high horse—in both senses. No Latin quotations would be listened to, and—only perhaps you will think this a small matter—" Miss Carrington looked at the Novelist out of the corners of her large, innocent eyes—"I don't think she would want to be kissed on the forehead."

"Ay!" said the Novelist, rashly. "That'll be no great deeficulty. She'll like it on her cheeks, na dout, or maybe on her lips?"

"Indeed?" said Miss Carrington, and a sudden frost had come into her voice. "No great difficulty? On her cheek or her lips?"

"Did ye no mean that?" said the Novelist, abashed.

"On her cheek—or lips?" The measured repetition chilled the very bones of the Novelist.

"There wull no be any ither vera suitable situation, wull there?" he inquired, desperately.

"Perhaps," said Miss Carrington, in a voice of infinite condescension, "if he went on his knees to beg the favour, he might be permitted to kiss—her hand!"

"That wouldna be a vera dignified poseetion for a hero," objected the Novelist.

"Ah," said Miss Carrington, compassionately. "Poor soul, then he would have to dispense with the heroine. Real heroines, Mr. MacGregor, are so dreadfully selfish. They never seem to consider the hero's dignity. Possibly they think it a great honour for the hero to obey their very slightest wish."

Miss Carrington, having delivered herself of this judgment, leaned back negligently in her seat after the fashion of a queen at ease, as though she neither wished nor expected contradiction. She looked out upon the landscape, through which the train was rushing—hills purple and grey, rivers brown with spate, kine shaggy and contented—with idle equanimity.

To the Novelist, on the other hand, a phenomenon, strange in his experience, occurred. It seemed to him that his knees, in obedience to some unaccountable impulse, were stretching downward—yes—without any doubt they were—outward and downward, dragging his body after him. He was leaving the seat of the railway carriage—he had left it—he was on the dusty floor upon his knees at the feet of Miss Carrington.

His amazement at this phenomenon was such that he was hardly conscious of his

"HE WAS ON THE DUSTY FLOOR UPON HIS KNEES."

actions, but a precautionary instinct moved him at the same time to knock over the packet of sandwiches he had brought with him, partly that he might by that means attract the attention of Miss Carrington, who was still looking out of the window; partly that he might have some pretext for his unusual behaviour in case of contingencies.

Miss Carrington, her ear caught by the sound of the falling sandwiches, turned her head.

"Whatever is the matter, Mr. MacGregor?" she asked, sweetly, on seeing the Novelist in this unusual position.

The train let off steam in a shrill whistle. It was not in the least like the sound of the pibroch over misty hills. The Novelist wished it were, and that he himself, like one of his own heroes, were out on the heather, mounted, arm'd *cap-à-pie*, magnanimously receiving into his arms the form of the fainting heroine.

"Ah—ah've dropped ma sandwiches," was all he could say.

"I hope you will find them," said Miss Carrington, coldly, transferring her attention to the landscape once more, with an obvious lack of interest.

Shades of his heroes, wearing countenances full of reproach for his weak-minded evasion, rose before the Novelist's eyes.

"Na, na," he said, in agonized tones, "it's a lee! Ah — ah'm meaning that it was no ma sandwiches. The fa-act is——"

"We are just coming into a station," said Miss Carrington, hurriedly.

The Novelist rose from his knees in dire apprehension that the station was Paisley. If so, what might he not have lost, what further adventures might he not have to go through before he attained his heart's desire? Enough—if he were writing a novel — to make fifteen chapters and justify the hero in receiving half-a-dozen wounds. Even if it were not Paisley—which meant parting—what had happened? Had Miss Carrington understood what was in his mind? Had she shrunk from him or not? Or had she simply taken for truth that detestable falsehood of his in the matter of the sandwiches?

It was not Paisley, but there were several passengers waiting to get in. Mr. MacGregor would have guarded the carriage-door against a lion, or a regiment of crowing Highlanders skilled in handling the claymore; but while he was bold in imagination, he was outmanœuvred in practice. The handle of the door was turned suddenly, and a middle-aged man entered and took a seat. A tall, reedy man he was, with red whiskers and blue spectacles, behind which his eyes seemed to glare fiercely.

There could be no excuse for turning this gentleman out. Miss Carrington would probably resent the attempt. And so, with Mr. MacGregor in a most unwonted state of perturbation, the train started once more along the lines. Miss Carrington still read her book, but the scorn had gone from her face.

The third passenger seemed a most irritable person. He fidgeted incessantly on his seat; he folded and unfolded his paper; he took off his blue spectacles and stared at the Novelist; he put them on again and

glared at him. Finally, he assumed a rigid attitude, and cracking the fingers of both his hands loudly, said, in a harsh, monotonous voice :—

"I won't have it—I won't—won't—won't—won't have it!"

Miss Carrington looked up with some surprise from her book.

"What'll ye no hae?" inquired the Novelist.

"Anything," said the third passenger, fiercely, "g-r-r-r-r!"

"Oh!" cried Miss Carrington in alarm, dropping her book at this sudden noise.

"G-r-r-r-r-r!" repeated the third passenger. He seemed as if he were trying to qualify for a Maxim gun.

"Wull ye be having a cold in your head?" inquired the Novelist, with studied politeness.

"G-r-r-r-r-r!"

There was no other response, and the Novelist felt a small hand placed nervously on his own, as Miss Carrington whispered, tremulously :—

"What shall we do, Mr. MacGregor? I'm—I'm afraid the man's mad."

"Ah'm thinking that maybe he's a Natural," said the Novelist, reassuringly. "But ah'll no let him hurt ye. Dinna fash yoursel' at all." Then, raising his voice sternly, the Novelist went on, "Ye'll understand that the like of such whustling wull no be conducive to the peace of mind of the lady passenger."

"Yow—yow—yow!" said the third passenger, in the tone of a snapping dog.

"And I'll hae ye tak' a care," said the Novelist, angrily, "that ye dinna repeat it."

Natural or artificial, this man was not going to flout him and alarm Miss Carrington with impunity. The small hand still touched the Novelist's arm, as if for safety.

"HE ASSUMED A RIGID ATTITUDE."

The only answer vouchsafed by the third passenger consisted in the repetition of the word "Boo," several times, while he shifted his nose into a vertical position, so that his eyes leered from under the blue spectacles.

"Mind now!" said the Novelist.

The third passenger drew from his side-pocket a large bowie knife, which he stroked tenderly, purring the while, like a well-filled cat. The condition of affairs was growing serious. Miss Carrington had fallen back on her seat, with a little shriek, and the Novelist had risen to his feet.

"Set awa' your implement," he said, firmly. The strange man made no answer. He sat, stroking and purring, and his eyes blinked cunningly under his spectacles. "D'ye hear me?" said the Novelist, making a step towards him.

In that instant—the mere twinkling of an eye—the man unsheathed his knife, leapt from the seat, and ran at Mr. MacGregor, head downward, a full-blown lunatic.

"Help!" shouted Miss Carrington, in the extremity of fear.

She hid her face in her hands and was conscious of loud scuffling. This way and that the combatants surged—a writhing knot, the Novelist panting with deep breaths, the madman snarling and yapping horribly. Bump—bump—she heard the banging of heads, and seemed to hear the straining of their set muscles. Then a great draught blew across the carriage, and she opened her eyes to see the farther door wide open, and the Novelist standing beside it alone.

The train was steaming through moorland country unheedingly.

"Where is he?" asked Miss Carrington, faintly.

"THIS WAY AND THAT THE COMBATANTS SURGED."

"Ah've throw'd him out," said the Novelist, in a doleful voice, "and ah'm thinking that, aiblins, ah'd better be ganging after him."

"Why?" said Miss Carrington. "You'll be killed."

"It'll be a hanging matter anyway, ah'm thinking," said the Novelist, lugubriously, "for it's no a legal proceeding to be throwing a Natural out of the train."

"But I can witness that you did it in self-defence," urged Miss Carrington.

"The train'll no be driving mair than sixteen miles the hour," said the Novelist, stubbornly, stepping to the open door.

"It is," said Miss Carrington, "much more."

"And ah'm afeared the poor deevil has hurted himsel'," said the Novelist, looking out upon the line.

"Stop!" said Miss Carrington, imperiously. To be imperious is the divine right of a maid, while to subserve is luxury to a man. But this was no time for Mr. MacGregor to find luxury in subservience any more than ever it was to the heroes of his novels when the pibroch was blown at midnight over the misty hills.

"Ye'll tak' care to close the door ahint me?" he said, apologetically, and without more ado flung himself carefully from the train.

Miss Carrington saw him fall in a heap upon a heathery patch, and lie a moment, contemplating sky. Then he picked himself up and shook himself to see if he were unbroken. Waving his hand in her direction to emphasize the closing of the door, he made his way along the side of the line to where the lunatic had fallen — a mile away now. His foot was on his native heath, so that he strode manfully. And Miss Carrington pulled the bell above the carriage door.

"And he—he's left his sandwiches!" she said to herself, hysterically, divided between tears and laughter.

The train drew up in an instant, and Miss Carrington having explained matters to the guard, a detachment of able-bodied volunteers hastened down the line. Mr. MacGregor, bearing his broken-legged foe, met them halfway. The foe was placed in the guard's compartment with a doctor in charge, and Mr. MacGregor returned to his former carriage.

Once more the train moved towards Paisley.

"I think," said Miss Carrington, demurely, handing the Novelist a packet—"I think these are your sandwiches."

"It was a lee about the dratted sandwiches," said Mr. MacGregor, finding himself upon his knees once more.

"Then what are you looking for?" she said.

"Ah'm thinking it's a heroine," said the Novelist, audaciously.

"And so I shall have the pleasure of your company even farther than Paisley," said Miss Patsie Carrington, shortly afterwards, with mischievous intent.

"Ye wull," said the Novelist.

THE POSTER OF "LA FRONDE."

"*La Fronde.*"

THE FIRST DAILY PAPER PRODUCED FOR WOMEN BY WOMEN.

BY FREDERICK DOLMAN.

A WOMEN'S "daily" has for a long time been the dream of some "advanced women" in England and America. By some strange irony of circumstances the practical realization of this dream has been left to the gay and frivolous Parisienne—as she is pictured, that is, by her Anglo-Saxon sisters.

In the autumn of 1897 the following advertisement attracted some amount of attention throughout France:—

Women form the majority of the population in France. Thousands of women, spinsters or widows, are living in independence of men. Women pay taxes, though they cannot vote, contribute by their manual or intellectual labour to the wealth of the nation, and claim the right to be heard on all questions pertaining to the society of which they are members equally with men.

La Fronde, a women's journal for women, will be the faithful echo of their feelings, wants, and claims.

MADAME MARGUERITE DURAND, PROPRIETOR AND EDITOR OF "LA FRONDE."
From a Photograph.

On the boulevards this announcement was received with no small amount of ridicule and derision, and when it was learned that the new paper was to be entirely produced by the work of women, it was freely prophesied that the "fad" would not last a month. But when the first number of *La Fronde* appeared on December 9th, 1897, the tone completely changed. The Press generally gave the fair new-comer something better than a chivalrous welcome, and 200,000 copies were sold. In a short time the sound editorship, accurate information, and philosophic style of *La Fronde* caused it to be dubbed "the *Times* in petticoats"—a sobriquet which its conductors smilingly accepted as a high compliment.

From a] THE EDITORIAL STAFF AND CONTRIBUTORS. *[Photograph.*

It has celebrated its second birthday, and looking at a copy of *La Fronde* in comparison with its Paris contemporaries, I should unhesitatingly conclude that the first daily journal "*féminin* and *féministe*" had come to stay.

"But *La Fronde?*" I can hear the puzzled reader exclaim. Many visitors to Paris, glancing at the papers on the kiosks, must have passed this, the title conveying no meaning to them. They may or may not remember that this was the name given to a certain civil war which afflicted France in 1648–53. The historical recollection does not give much help. The civil war was nicknamed "La Fronde," or "The War of the Sling," from the mimic conflict of boys with this weapon in the ditches of Paris. The leaders of the people against the Parliament spoke of it as a "war of the public weal"; but Michelet, the historian, characterizes the campaign as "a burlesque war," "a war of children with a child's nickname." This little excursion into history, therefore, leaves us no wiser as to the fitness of this title for women's pioneer in daily journalism. When Madame Emmy Fournier, the *rédactrice-en-chef*—or acting editor, as we should say—was questioned on the point she could only shrug her shoulders. So we must conclude that this choice of a title is the one piece of caprice in this noteworthy enterprise with which Madame Marguerite Durand, the founder and editor of *La Fronde*, has justified her sex.

Paris has not its Fleet Street, the newspaper offices being scattered about the west central district. The *La Fronde* building is in the Rue St. Georges, a quiet street off the Rue de la Fayette. It is a typical Parisian *hôtel* of five storeys, with white stonework and latticed windows, converted for the nonce to the purposes of newspaper production—such a building as contrasts most agreeably with the dingy, smoke-begrimed bricks and mortar of our own Fleet Street. An electric arc lamp illumines the title, *La Fronde*, and reveals in the lower windows large copies of

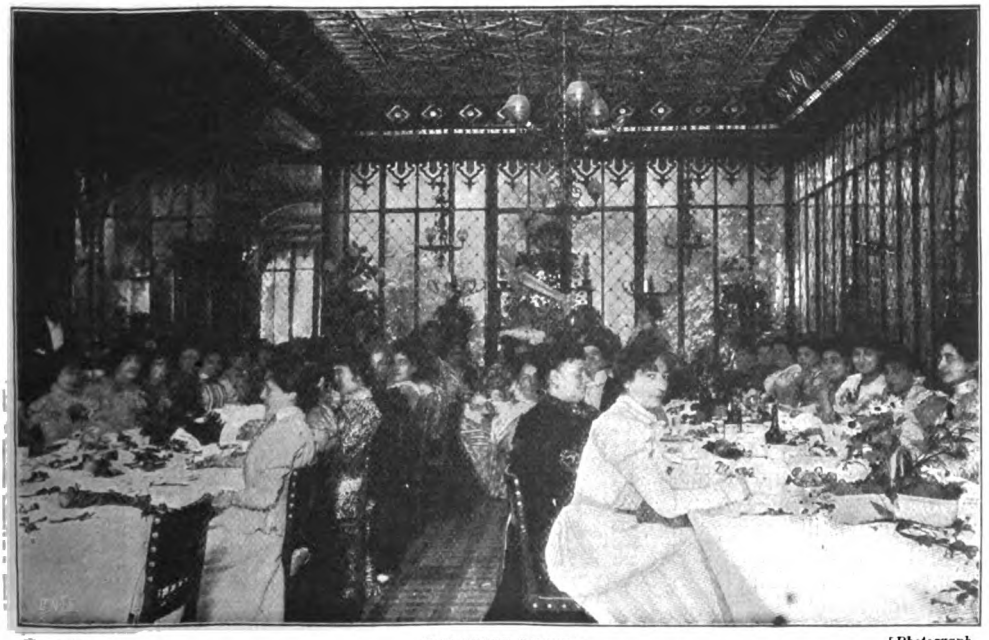
From a] MADAME FOURNIER, THE ACTING EDITOR. *[Photograph.*

Mlle. Dufau's symbolical picture of the women of the country, whether in the costume of the peasant or in that of the nun, joining hands together and acclaiming the newspaper as the herald of the enfranchisement of their sex.

An inquiry of a matronly janitor in her little office at the foot of the staircase brings down a girlish messenger in neat black dress, who conducts me to the room of Madame Fournier, *rédactrice-en-chef*. Madame Fournier is busy with MSS. and proofs, but rises from her chair, and with all the charm of one of the most charming Parisiennes it has been my good fortune to meet, at once places herself at my disposal for this article in THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

THE BUSINESS MANAGER.
From a Photograph.

La Fronde, she tells me, was founded entirely by the efforts of Madame Marguerite Durand. As the wife of a well-known Deputy, Madame Durand had become intimately acquainted with politics and politicians, and for some time before undertaking the present enterprise she had contributed to the *Figaro*. About a dozen ladies were employed as members of the indoor staff, as writers, sub-editors, and reporters, all of whom came practically fresh to the routine work of a newspaper office. Besides these, there were twenty or thirty regular contributors to the columns of *La Fronde*, most of whom had had previous journalistic experience in writing occasionally for other papers. Of this number the most distinguished was the lady with whose work, under the *nom-de-plume* of "Séverine," Paris had long been familiar. Séverine contributes nearly every day a short political and social *causerie*, under the title of "Notes d'une Frondeuse." I made the acquaintance of some members



[From a] THE STAFF DINNER. [*Photograph.*

From a] THE EDITOR'S SANCTUM. *[Photograph.*

of the staff when Madame Fournier took me over the building. With the financial editor, for instance, a young lady who with tape and telephone by her side was absorbed in Bourse quotations and reports; perhaps it was by way of relief from such prosaic things that she had decorated the walls of her room with the playbills of Paris theatres, unless, indeed, this was the work of her *confrère*, the dramatic critic, who at other hours may pen her "notices" at this same desk. I met this lady on the staircase, about to make her way to a *première* at one of the theatres, and was there introduced to an editorial writer who had just arrived for her evening's work. The reporters' room was empty, and I was disappointed in not seeing the two fair correspondents who won renown at Rennes by their pen-pictures of the trial of Dreyfus, whose cause, by the way, has been championed by *La Fronde* from its first number.

Judging by those whom I saw and by their portraits, as published in these pages, *les Frondeuses* may be described as a body of intellectual women, full of energy and vivacity, many still having the bloom of youth, and most that piquant charm which is so seldom found outside Paris. In her manner and costume nothing could be more unlike the "blue stockings" of a caricature which is scarcely yet discredited. Even the empty rooms through which I pass bespeak the femininity of their usual occupants—in the scent of flowers, the air of delicacy given by a dozen little knick-knacks, and in other less definable ways. There is but one exception to the womanliness of *La Fronde*, in the person of one of the political writers who chooses to don masculine attire, after the example of the great artist, Rosa Bonheur.

Madame Durand's editorial sanctum looked almost as pretty as a pretty boudoir under the soft glow of electric light, irradiating the light tints of its decoration and furnishing. The dainty writing-table and luxuriously easy chairs suggested a delightful union between the graces of life, with its weightier cares and responsibilities, as exemplified in the directress of a daily newspaper. Among other photographs in the room were many portraits of members of Madame Durand's staff, *àpropos* of which I learned of the warm spirit

THE REPORTERS' ROOM—ONE OF THE POLITICAL WRITERS IN MASCULINE DRESS.
From a Photograph.

of comradeship animating all *les Frondeuses*. They dine together on the day of St. Margaret—Madame Durand's patron saint—and on page 213 appears a picture of last year's festival at a well-known garden restaurant in the Bois de Boulogne. Adjoining Madame Durand's room is the *La Fronde* library. In this apartment, which is no less tastefully furnished, are being collected all the books published by Frenchwomen. Practically all that have been given to the world since the establishment of *La Fronde* are to be found, and nearly every day presentation copies of new works arrive from their authors.

THE SPORTING EDITOR.
From a Photograph.

The composing-room is at the top of the building. About twenty women are employed, gathered together from various printing establishments in Paris. There is a neatness, a cleanliness, I cannot help noticing about these *ouvrières* and their work such as is not usually associated with a type-setting establishment. The young woman to whom the task of proof-reading is intrusted sits in an adjoining corridor, a picture of pleasant serenity such as her occupation does not always engender. But, then, there is no grinding machinery to rack her nerves. The actual printing of *La Fronde*, as is not unusual with Paris newspapers, I believe, is put out to contract and is done in other premises. On the other hand, the business connected with advertisements and the sale of the paper is carried on here by a staff of lady clerks, who are prettily uniformed in green cloth and white facings.

Descending to the ground floor again, I finish my tour of inspection with the *salon*—an important feature in the establishments of leading French newspapers. In this commodious yet cosy hall, resembling a large drawing-room, ladies come and take afternoon tea or a glass of wine, read the paper, or chat with their friends for half an hour or so. Now and again, it is the scene of evening parties at which Madame Durand acts as hostess. On such occasions you would meet there not merely the leaders of the "woman's movement" in France, but also a company of the most distinguished men and women of Paris in politics, art, literature, and journalism. Splendid toilettes dazzle the eyes, musical "stars" enchant the ears. The most recent of these brilliant functions took place last December in celebration of the second anniversary of the newspaper, when Madame Durand received a testimonial from its friends and admirers in the shape of a bronze *bas-relief* by the sculptress, Madame Syamour, representing "the woman of the past" raising her veil of ignorance and

From a] THE COMPOSING-ROOM. [*Photograph.*

From a] THE SALON. *[Photograph.*

discerning the coming of a new day for her sex.

This *salon* is also the meeting-place of several societies in which *La Fronde*, as a newspaper, takes a sympathetic interest. The "Ligue du Droit des Femmes," for instance, meets here once a month. By its persistent advocacy as well as practical aid it is said that *La Fronde* has already proved itself an important factor in bringing about reforms that Frenchwomen have long desired—such as the right to the disposal of their own earnings or properties, their representation on tribunals of commerce, and their admission as *avocats*.

It must not be supposed, however, that *La Fronde* concerns itself only with feminine affairs. Published at a *sou*, it contains four fairly large pages—being about the same size as most of the Paris "dailies"—and probably about half this space is occupied by matter which would interest men as well as women, such as home and foreign politics, literature and the drama, finance and sport—although sport is treated mainly from a woman's standpoint. On the other hand, the heading "Le Home" is so unfamiliar in a French newspaper as to give it a very distinctive meaning. *La Fronde* shows a strong interest in the welfare of working women—among whom it circulates largely—and has organized a special department for the benefit of the female "unemployed." In politics generally it is Radical and Republican, and—true to the best instincts of women—is all for peace and amity in international relations. Very vigorous were its protests, by the way, against the insults to Queen Victoria which were recently rampant in a disreputable section of the French Press.

From a] THE EDITORIAL PET. *[Photograph.*

Hilda Wade.

By Grant Allen.

[We cannot allow the concluding chapter of this story to go to press without an expression of our deep regret at Mr. Grant Allen's lamented death—a regret in which none will join more sincerely than the readers of this Magazine, whom he did so much to entertain. A man of wide and cultured knowledge and of the most charming personality, a writer who, treating of a wide variety of subjects, touched nothing which he did not beautify, he filled a place which no man living can exactly occupy. The following chapter had been roughly sketched before his final illness, and his anxiety, when debarred from work, to see it finished was relieved by the considerate kindness of his friend and neighbour, Dr. Conan Doyle, who, hearing of his trouble, talked it over with him, gathered his ideas, and finally wrote it out for him in the form in which it now appears—a beautiful and pathetic act of friendship which it is a pleasure to record.]

XII.—THE EPISODE OF THE DEAD MAN WHO SPOKE.

I WILL not trouble you with details of those three terrible days and nights when we drifted helplessly about at the mercy of the currents on our improvised life-raft up and down the English Channel. The first night was the worst: slowly after that we grew used to the danger, the cold, the hunger, and the thirst; our senses were numbed: we passed whole hours together in a sort of torpor, just vaguely wondering whether a ship would come in sight to save us, obeying the merciful law that those who are utterly exhausted are incapable of acute fear, and acquiescing in the probability of our own extinction. But however slender the chance—and as the hours stole on it seemed slender enough—Hilda still kept her hopes fixed mainly on Sebastian. No daughter could have watched the father she loved more eagerly and closely than Hilda watched her life-long enemy—the man who had wrought such evil upon her and hers. To save our own lives without him would be useless. At all hazards, she must keep him alive, on the bare chance of a rescue. If he died, there died with him the last hope of justice and redress.

As for Sebastian, after the first half-hour, during which he lay white and unconscious, he opened his eyes faintly, as we could see by the moonlight, and gazed around him with a strange, puzzled stare of inquiry. Then his senses returned to him by degrees. "What! you, Cumberledge?" he murmured, measuring me with his eye: "and you, Nurse Wade? Well, I thought you would manage it." There was a tone almost of amusement in his voice, a half-ironical tone which had been familiar to us in the old hospital days. He raised himself on one arm and gazed at the water all round. Then he was silent for some minutes. At last he spoke again. "Do you know what I ought to do if I were consistent?" he asked, with a tinge of pathos in his words. "Jump off this raft, and deprive you of your last chance of triumph—the triumph which you have worked for so hard. You want to save my life for your own ends, not

"HILDA WATCHED HER LIFE-LONG ENEMY."

for mine. Why should I help you to my own undoing?"

Hilda's voice was tenderer and softer than usual as she answered, "No, not for my own ends alone, and not for your undoing, but to give you one last chance of unburdening your conscience. Some men are too small to be capable of remorse: their little souls have no room for such a feeling. You are great enough to feel it and to try to crush it down. But you *cannot* crush it down: it crops up in spite of you. You have tried to bury it in your soul, and you have failed. It is your remorse that has driven you to make so many attempts against the only living souls who knew and understood. If ever we get safely to land once more—and God knows it is not likely—I give you still the chance of repairing the mischief you have done, and of clearing my father's memory from the cruel stain which you and only you can wipe away."

Sebastian lay long, silent once more, gazing up at her fixedly, with the foggy, white moonlight shining upon his bright, inscrutable eyes. "You are a brave woman, Maisie Yorke-Bannerman," he said, at last, slowly: "a very brave woman. I will try to live—I too—for a purpose of my own. I say it again: he that loseth his life shall gain it."

Incredible as it may sound, in half an hour more he was lying fast asleep on that wave-tossed raft, and Hilda and I were watching him tenderly. And it seemed to us as we watched him that a change had come over those stern and impassive features. They had softened and melted until his face was that of a gentler and better type. It was as if some inward change of soul was moulding the fierce old Professor into a nobler and more venerable man. Day after day we drifted on, without food or water. The agony was terrible: I will not attempt to describe it, for to do so is to bring it back too clearly to my memory. Hilda and I, being younger and stronger, bore up against it well; but Sebastian, old and worn, and still weak from the plague, grew daily weaker. His pulse just beat, and sometimes I could hardly feel it thrill under my finger. He became delirious, and murmured much about Yorke-Bannerman's daughter. Sometimes he forgot all, and spoke to me in the friendly terms of our old acquaintance at Nathaniel's, giving me directions and advice about imaginary operations. Hour after hour we watched for a sail, and no sail appeared. One could hardly believe we could toss about so long in the main highway of traffic without seeing a ship or spying more than the smoke-trail of some passing steamer.

As far as I could judge, during those days and nights, the wind veered from south-west to south-east, and carried us steadily and surely towards the open Atlantic. On the third evening out, about five o'clock, I saw a dark object on the horizon. Was it moving towards us? We strained our eyes in breathless suspense. A minute passed, and then another. Yes, there could be no doubt. It grew larger and larger: it was a ship—a steamer. We made all the signs of distress we could manage. I stood up and waved Hilda's white shawl frantically in the air.

"I STOOD UP AND WAVED HILDA'S WHITE SHAWL."

There was half an hour of suspense, and our hearts sank as we thought that they were about to pass us. Then the steamer hove to a little and seemed to notice us. Next instant we dropped upon our knees, for we saw they were lowering a boat. They were coming to our aid. They would be in time to save us.

Hilda watched our rescuers with parted lips and agonized eyes. Then she felt Sebastian's pulse. "Thank Heaven," she cried, "he still lives! They will be here before he is quite past confession."

Sebastian opened his eyes dreamily. "A boat?" he asked.

"Yes, a boat!"

"Then you have gained your point, child. I am able to collect myself. Give me a few hours more life, and what I can do to make amends to you shall be done."

I don't know why, but it seemed longer between the time when the boat was lowered and the moment when it reached us than it had seemed during the three days and nights we lay tossing about helplessly on the open Atlantic. There were times when we could hardly believe that it was really moving. At last, however, it reached us, and we saw the kindly faces and outstretched hands of our rescuers. Hilda clung to Sebastian with a wild clasp as the men reached out for her.

"No, take *him* first!" she cried, when the sailors, after the custom of men, tried to help her into the gig before attempting to save us: "his life is worth more to me than my own. Take him—and for God's sake lift him gently, for he is nearly gone!"

They took him aboard, and laid him down in the stern. Then, and then only, Hilda stepped into the boat, and I staggered after her. The officer in charge, a kind young Irishman, had had the foresight to bring brandy and a little beef essence. We ate and drank what we dared as they rowed us back to the steamer. Sebastian lay back, with his white eyelashes closed over the lids, and the livid hue of death upon his emaciated cheeks; but he drank a teaspoonful or two of brandy, and swallowed the beef essence with which Hilda fed him.

"Your father is the most exhausted of the party," the officer said, in a low undertone. "Poor fellow, he is too old for such adventures. He seems to have hardly a spark of life left in him."

Hilda shuddered with evident horror. "He is not my father—thank Heaven!" she cried, leaning over him and supporting his drooping head, in spite of her own fatigue and the cold that chilled our very bones. "But I think he will live. I mean him to live. He is my best friend now—and my bitterest enemy!"

The officer looked at her in surprise, and then touched his forehead, inquiringly, with a quick glance at me. He evidently thought cold and hunger had affected her reason. I shook my head. "It is a peculiar case," I whispered. "What the lady says is right. Everything depends for us upon our keeping him alive till we reach England."

They rowed us to the steamer, and we were handed tenderly up the side. There, the ship's surgeon and everybody else on board did their best to restore us after our terrible experience. The ship was the *Don*, of the Royal Mail Steamship Company's West Indian line; and nothing could exceed the kindness with which we were treated by every soul on board, from the captain to the stewardess and the junior cabin-boy. Sebastian's great name carried weight even here. As soon as it was generally understood on board that we had brought with us the famous physiologist and pathologist, the man whose name was famous throughout Europe, we might have asked for anything that the ship contained without fear of a refusal. But, indeed, Hilda's sweet face was enough in itself to win the interest and sympathy of all who saw it.

By eleven next morning we were off Plymouth Sound: and by midday we had landed at the Mill Bay Docks, and were on our way to a comfortable hotel in the neighbourhood.

Hilda was too good a nurse to bother Sebastian at once about his implied promise. She had him put to bed, and kept him there carefully.

"What do you think of his condition?" she asked me, after the second day was over. I could see by her own grave face that she had already formed her own conclusions.

"He cannot recover," I answered. "His constitution, shattered by the plague and by his incessant exertions, has received too severe a shock in this shipwreck. He is doomed."

"So I think. The change is but temporary. He will not last out three days more, I fancy."

"He has rallied wonderfully to-day," I said; "but 'tis a passing rally; a flicker: no more. If you wish to do anything, now is the moment. If you delay, you will be too late."

"I will go in and see him," Hilda answered. "I have said nothing more to him, but I think he is moved: I think he means to keep his promise. He has shown a strange tenderness to me these last few days. I almost believe he is at last remorseful, and ready to undo the evil which he has done."

"I ALMOST BELIEVE HE IS AT LAST REMORSEFUL"

She stole softly into the sick room: I followed her on tip-toe, and stood near the door behind the screen which shut off the draught from the patient. Sebastian stretched his arms out to her. "Ah, Maisie, my child," he cried, addressing her by the name she had borne in her childhood, "don't leave me any more. Stay with me always, Maisie! I can't get on without you."

"But you hated once to see me!"

"Because I have so wronged you."

"And now? Will you do nothing to repair the wrong?"

"My child, I can never undo that wrong. It is irreparable, for the past can never be recalled; but I will try my best to minimize it. Call Cumberledge in. I am quite sensible now, quite conscious. You will be my witness, Cumberledge, that my pulse is normal and that my brain is clear. I will confess it all. Maisie, your constancy and your firmness have conquered me. And your devotion to your father. If only I had had a daughter like you, my girl, one whom I could have loved and trusted, I might have been a better man: I might even have done better work for science—though on that side at least I have little with which to reproach myself."

Hilda bent over him. "Hubert and I are here," she said, slowly, in a strangely calm voice: "but that is not enough. I want a public, an attested, confession. It must be given before witnesses, and signed and sworn to. Somebody might throw doubt upon my word and Hubert's."

Sebastian shrank back. "Given before witnesses, and signed and sworn to! Maisie, is this humiliation necessary: do you exact it?"

Hilda was inexorable. "You know yourself how you are situated. You have only a day or two to live," she said, in an impressive voice. "You must do it at once, or never. You have postponed it all your life. Now, at this last moment, you must make up for it. Will you die with an act of injustice unconfessed on your conscience?"

He paused and struggled. "I could—if it were not for you," he answered.

"Then do it for me," Hilda cried. "Do it for me! I ask it of you, not as a favour, but as a right. I *demand* it!" She stood, white, stern, inexorable, by his couch, and laid her hand upon his shoulder.

He paused once more; then he murmured feebly, in a querulous tone, "What witnesses? Whom do you wish to be present?"

Hilda spoke clearly and distinctly. She had thought it all out with herself beforehand. "Such witnesses as will carry absolute conviction to the mind of all the world: irreproachable, disinterested witnesses: official witnesses. In the first place, a commissioner of oaths. Then a Plymouth doctor, to show that you are in a fit state of mind to make a confession. Next, Mr. Horace Mayfield, who defended my father. Lastly, Dr. Blake Crawfurd, who watched the case on your behalf at the trial."

"But, Hilda," I interposed, "we may possibly find that they cannot come away from London just now. They are busy men, and likely to be engaged."

"They will come if I pay their fees. I do not mind how much this costs me. What is money compared to this one great object of my life?"

"And then—the delay! Suppose that we are too late?"

"He will live some days yet. I can telegraph up at once. I want no hole-and-corner confession, which may afterwards be useless, but an open avowal before the most approved witnesses. If he will make it, well and good: if not, my life-work will have failed; but I had rather it failed than draw back one inch from the course which I have laid down for myself."

I looked at the worn face of Sebastian. He nodded his head slowly. "She has conquered," he answered, turning upon the pillow. "Let her have her own way. I hid it for years, for science sake. That was my motive, Cumberledge, and I am too near death to lie. Science has now nothing more to gain or lose by me. I have served her well, but I am worn out in her service. Maisie may do as she will. I accept her ultimatum."

We telegraphed up, at once. Fortunately, both men were disengaged, and both keenly interested in the case. By that evening Horace Mayfield was talking it all over with me in the hotel at Southampton. "Well, Hubert, my boy," he said, "a woman, we know, can do a great deal"; he smiled his familiar smile, like a genial fat toad; "but if your Yorke-Bannerman succeeds in getting a confession out of Sebastian, she'll extort my admiration." He paused a moment, then he added, as an afterthought, "I say that she'll extort my admiration: but, mind you, I don't know that I shall feel inclined to believe it. The facts have always appeared to me—strictly between ourselves, you know—to admit of only the one explanation."

"Wait and see," I answered. "You think it more likely that Miss Wade will have persuaded Sebastian to confess to things that never happened, than that he will convince you of Yorke-Bannerman's innocence?"

The great Q.C. fingered his cigarette-holder affectionately. "You hit it first time," he answered. "That is precisely my attitude. The evidence against our poor friend was so peculiarly black. It would take a great deal to make me disbelieve it."

"But surely a confession——!"

"Ah, well, let me hear the confession, and then I shall be better able to judge."

Even as he spoke Hilda had entered the room.

"There will be no difficulty about that, Mr. Mayfield. You shall hear it, and I trust that it will make you repent for taking so black a view of the case of your own client."

"Without prejudice, Miss Bannerman, without prejudice," said the lawyer, with some confusion. "Our conversation is entirely between ourselves, and to the world I have always upheld that your father was an innocent man."

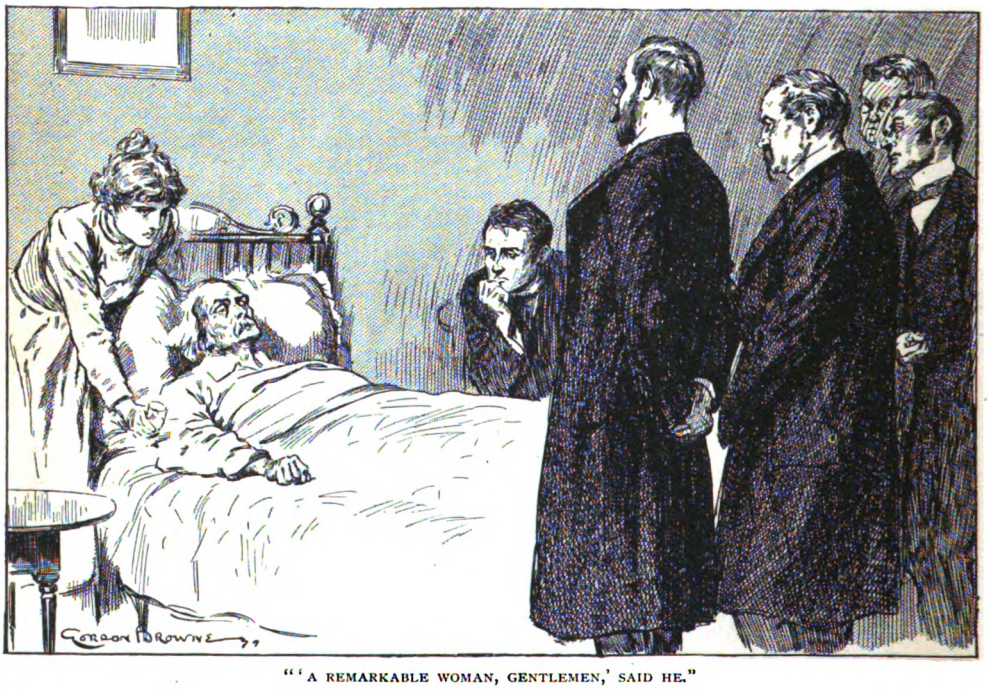
But such distinctions are too subtle for a loving woman.

"He *was* an innocent man," said she, angrily. "It was your business not only to

"'HE WAS AN INNOCENT MAN,' SAID SHE, ANGRILY."

believe it, but to prove it. You have neither believed it nor proved it; but if you will come upstairs with me, I will show you that I have done both."

Mayfield glanced at me and shrugged his fat shoulders. Hilda had led the way, and we both followed her. In the room of the sick man our other witnesses were waiting: a tall, dark, austere man, who was introduced to me as Dr. Blake Crawfurd, whose name I had heard as having watched the case for Sebastian at the time of the investigation. There were present also a commissioner of oaths, and Dr. Mayby, a small local practitioner, whose attitude towards the great scientist upon the couch was almost absurdly reverential. The three men were grouped at the foot of the bed, and Mayfield and I joined them. Hilda stood beside the dying man, and rearranged the pillow against which



"'A REMARKABLE WOMAN, GENTLEMEN,' SAID HE."

he was propped. Then she held some brandy to his lips. "Now!" said she.

The stimulant brought a shade of colour into his ghastly cheeks, and the old quick, intelligent gleam came back into his deep-sunk eyes.

"A remarkable woman, gentlemen," said he, "a very noteworthy woman. I had prided myself that my will-power was the most powerful in the country—I had never met any to match it—but I do not mind admitting that, for firmness and tenacity, this lady is my equal. She was anxious that I should adopt one course of action. I was determined to adopt another. Your presence here is a proof that she has prevailed."

He paused for breath, and she gave him another small sip of the brandy.

"I execute her will ungrudgingly and with the conviction that it is the right and proper course for me to take," he continued. "You will forgive me some of the ill which I have done you, Maisie, when I tell you that I really died this morning—all unknown to Cumberledge and you—and that nothing but my will force has sufficed to keep spirit and body together until I should carry out your will in the manner which you suggested. I shall be glad when I have finished, for the effort is a painful one, and I long for the peace of dissolution. It is now a quarter to seven. I have every hope that I may be able to leave before eight."

It was strange to hear the perfect coolness with which he discussed his own approaching dissolution. Calm, pale, and impassive, his manner was that of a professor addressing his class. I had seen him speak so to a ring of dressers in the old days at Nathaniel's.

"The circumstances which led up to the

death of Admiral Scott Prideaux, and the suspicions which caused the arrest of Doctor Yorke-Bannerman, have never yet been fully explained, although they were by no means so profound that they might not have been unravelled at the time had a man of intellect concentrated his attention upon them. The police, however, were incompetent and the legal advisers of Dr. Bannerman hardly less so, and a woman only has had the wit to see that a gross injustice has been done. The true facts I will now lay before you."

Mayfield's broad face had reddened with indignation, but now his curiosity drove out every other emotion, and he leaned forward with the rest of us to hear the old man's story.

"In the first place, I must tell you that both Dr. Bannerman and myself were engaged at the time in an investigation upon the nature and properties of the vegetable alkaloids, and especially of aconitine. We hoped for the very greatest results from this drug, and we were both equally enthusiastic in our research. Especially, we had reason to believe that it might have a most successful action in the case of a certain rare but deadly disease, into the nature of which I need not enter. Reasoning by analogy, we were convinced that we had a certain cure for this particular ailment.

"Our investigation, however, was somewhat hampered by the fact that the condition in question is rare out of tropical countries, and that in our hospital wards we had not, at that time, any example of it. So serious was this obstacle that it seemed that we must leave other men more favourably situated to reap the benefit of our work and enjoy the credit of our discovery, but a curious chance gave us exactly what we were in search of, at the instant when we were about to despair. It was Yorke-Bannerman who came to me in my laboratory one day to tell me that he had in his private practice the very condition of which we were in search.

"'The patient,' said he, 'is my uncle, Admiral Scott Prideaux.'

"'Your uncle!' I cried, in amazement. 'But how came he to develop such a condition?'

"'His last commission in the Navy was spent upon the Malabar Coast, where the disease is endemic. There can be no doubt that it has been latent in his system ever since, and that the irritability of temper and indecision of character, of which his family have so often had to complain, were really among the symptoms of his complaint.'

"I examined the Admiral in consultation with my colleague, and I confirmed his diagnosis. But, to my surprise, Yorke-Bannerman showed the most invincible and reprehensible objection to experiment upon his relative. In vain I assured him that he must place his duty to science high above all other considerations. It was only after great pressure that I could persuade him to add an infinitesimal portion of aconitine to his prescriptions. The drug was a deadly one, he said, and the toxic dose was still to be determined. He could not push it in the case of a relative who trusted himself to his care. I tried to shake him in what I regarded as his absurd squeamishness—but in vain.

"But I had another resource. Bannerman's prescriptions were made up by a fellow named Barclay, who had been dispenser at Nathaniel's and afterwards set up as a chemist in Sackville Street. This man was absolutely in my power. I had discovered him at Nathaniel's in dishonest practices, and I held evidence which would have sent him to gaol. I held this over him now, and I made him, unknown to Bannerman, increase the doses of aconitine in the medicine until they were sufficient for my experimental purposes. I will not enter into figures, but suffice it that Bannerman was giving more than ten times what he imagined.

"You know the sequel. I was called in, and suddenly found that I had Bannerman in my power. There had been a very keen rivalry between us in science. He was the only man in England whose career might impinge upon mine. I had this supreme chance of putting him out of my way. He could not deny that he had been giving his uncle aconitine. I could prove that his uncle had died of aconitine. He could not himself account for the facts—he was absolutely in my power. I did not wish him to be condemned, Maisie. I only hoped that he would leave the court discredited and ruined. I give you my word that my evidence would have saved him from the scaffold."

Hilda was listening, with a set, white face.

"Proceed!" said she, and held out the brandy once more.

"I did not give the Admiral any more aconitine after I had taken over the case. But what was already in his system was enough. It was evident that we had seriously under-estimated the lethal dose. As to your father, Maisie, you have done me an injustice. You have always thought that I killed him."

"Proceed!" said she.

"I speak now from the brink of the grave, and I tell you that I did not. His heart was always weak, and it broke down under the strain. Indirectly I was the cause—I do not seek to excuse anything; but it was the sorrow and the shame that killed him. As to Barclay, the chemist, that is another matter. I will not deny that I was concerned in that mysterious disappearance, which was a seven days' wonder in the Press. I could not permit my scientific calm to be interrupted by the blackmailing visits of so insignificant a person. And then after many years you came, Maisie. You also got between me and that work which was life to me. You also showed that you would rake up this old matter and bring dishonour upon a name which has stood for something in science. You also—— but you will forgive me. I have held on to life for your sake as an atonement for my sins. Now, I go! Cumberledge—your notebook. Subjective sensations, swimming in the head, light flashes before the eyes, soothing torpor, some touch of coldness, constriction of the temples, humming in the ears, a sense of sinking—sinking—sinking!"

It was an hour later, and Hilda and I were alone in the chamber of death. As Sebastian lay there, a marble figure, with his keen eyes closed and his pinched, thin face whiter and serener than ever, I could not help gazing at him with some pangs of recollection. I could not avoid recalling the time when his very name was to me a word of power, and when the thought of him roused on my cheek a red flush of enthusiasm. As I looked I murmured two lines from Browning's "Grammarian's Funeral":—

> This is our Master, famous, calm, and dead,
> Borne on our shoulders.

Hilda Wade, standing beside me, with an awestruck air, added a stanza from the same great poem:—

> Lofty designs must close in like effects:
> Loftily lying,
> Leave him—still loftier than the world suspects,
> Living and dying.

I gazed at her with admiration. "And it is *you*, Hilda, who pay him this generous tribute!" I cried. "*You*, of all women!"

"Yes, it is I," she answered. "He was a great man, after all, Hubert. Not good, but great. And greatness by itself extorts our unwilling homage."

"Hilda," I cried, "you are a great woman. And a good woman, too. It makes me proud to think you will soon be my wife. For there is now no longer any just cause or impediment."

Beside the dead master, she laid her hand solemnly and calmly in mine. "No impediment," she answered. "I have vindicated and cleared my father's memory. And now, I can live. 'Actual life comes next.' We have much to do, Hubert."

"'NO IMPEDIMENT,' SHE ANSWERED."

A Wonderful Rock Garden.

By Herbert Pratt.

From a Photo. by] LAMPORT HALL—SHOWING BACK OF ROCKERY ON RIGHT. *[G. S. Garrett.*

READERS of The Strand Magazine are more or less familiar with that peculiar form of gardening which goes by the name of topiary work. The illustrations of the gardens at Levens Hall and Elvaston, with their curiously cut trees, which appeared some time since, as well as the pictures of the hedge-work of a Continental railway servant published more recently, provoked so much interest that it is thought our readers will be no less interested in another and different form of garden craft. It will be readily understood that, as in other fields of labour, so in the art of gardening, from time to time departures are made from the beaten track by ardent gardeners; but it is open to question whether any other garden the world over contains features of such peculiar interest as the one that for more than half a century has been the loving care of Sir Charles Isham, Bart.

Lamport Hall, the residence for nearly four centuries of the Isham family, and which lies between Northampton and Market Harborough, possesses many features of interest, amongst which the unique rockery contained within its borders is not the least attractive, and to this in particular the writer would draw attention. The word "unique" has been used, but this is incorrect, in so far as it is not the only rock garden in existence, as many a suburban cinder or clinker heap, covered with straggling vegetation, and dignified by the name of rockery, would testify. But the word may be allowed to stand, for probably nothing to be compared with the rockery at Lamport can be found the world over. The only other place that in any way bears a likeness to Sir Charles Isham's curious production is in Austria, and was made by the Emperor's gardener, but expert testimony says that it is far inferior to the Northampton rockery.

It was some fifty-two years ago that the idea of forming a dwarf rock garden was conceived, and through the years that have followed its owner has striven to realize certain ideals. To describe them in brief, it may be said that the Lamport rockery contains mountain scenery in miniature. To use the words of its constructor, "It is an assemblage of small caves, crevices, excavations, and inequalities, carpeted and incrusted with vegetation suited to the purpose." Practically in these last four words the difficulties of the situation are summed up, and from this high aim arose many needs that would not have sprung

into existence had a lesser ideal been present in Sir Charles Isham's mind. The rockery is placed close to the house, and is about 30yds. long by 14yds. wide, whilst in height it measures 8yds. On the side opposite to the house as well as on one of the narrow

From a Photo. by] VIEW OF THE ROCKERY, WITH ITS CONSTRUCTOR, SIR CHARLES ISHAM, BART. *[G. S. Garrett.*

sides it is shut in by a high, ivy-covered wall. On the opposite narrow side a conservatory again confines the area. Indeed, so small is the space occupied that until the visitor almost enters the gate that leads to the rockery he fails to realize its existence. The relation of the rockery to the house will be appreciated by a glance at the first picture. The ivy-covered wall on the right-hand side is the back of the rockery.

It will be seen, therefore, that it was with no small difficulty that the accompanying pictures were taken. It is in consequence of these photographic difficulties that Sir Charles Isham, who can be seen in the accompanying illustration seated on the rockery, appears to be so small in size. In reality he is but 10yds. distant from the camera, although it seems as though he were at least 100yds. away. It is not altogether an easy matter to convey a true idea of the smallness of the Lamport rockery except by the miniature size of the vegetation. The largest firs and cedars grown on the rockery do not exceed 3ft. in height. Some of them are of great age, and their collection has necessarily entailed a vast amount of trouble. No plant that in its natural state would grow quickly was ever a favourite at Lamport, and with those that showed signs of quick growth steps were taken to retard their progress, with the result mentioned.

Frequently, as is well known, the advancing age of tree life means that it must support other forms of vegetation, and the sight of a creeper-clad trunk in a forest ramble is amongst the most artistic; but it is equally well known that the clinging ivy sooner or later spells death to the supporting tree. At Lamport, not to be foreign to the natural, Sir Charles Isham has obtained and planted certain miniature ivies which the venerable conifers—some 3ft. high!—are compelled to support. This much should be said though: they have not been permitted to run at will, and therefore, if the same attention is given as in the past, are not likely to bring to the ground the trees by which they are upheld.

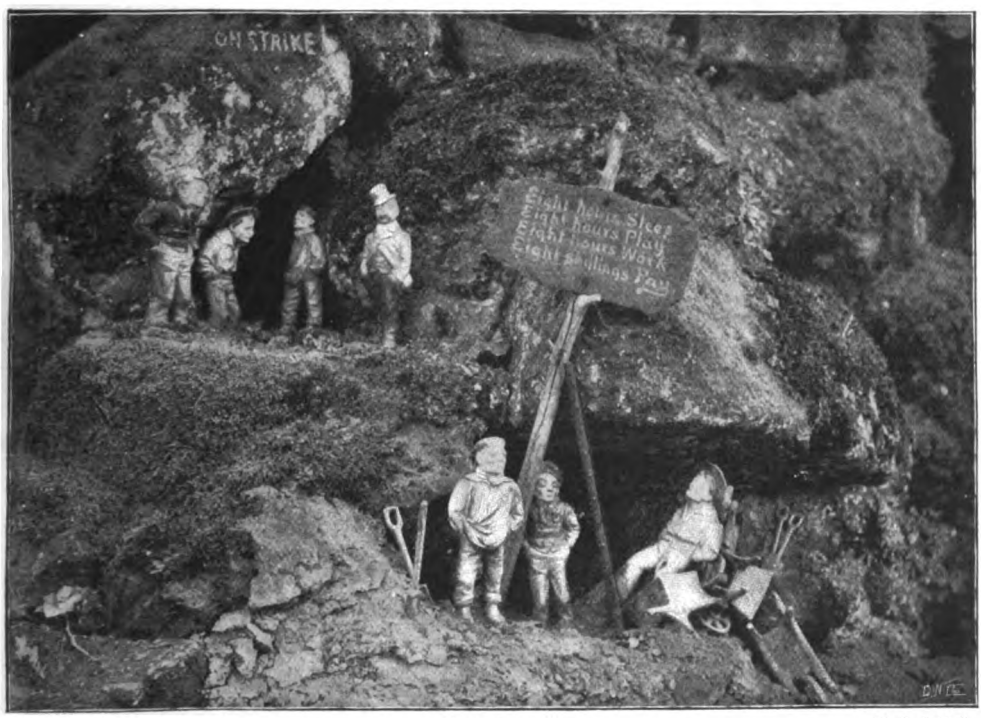
Here it may be mentioned that the method of planting is curious, if not absolutely unique. When Sir Charles wished to obtain a certain effect he would take a stone and either place it in position himself or give

instructions for this to be done in his presence, for every part of the structure has been put together either by or under the immediate supervision of the owner. He would, however, first chisel a small hole through the stone—often over a foot in depth—and fill the hole with soil, so that the roots of the plant, when inserted, could reach and obtain nourishment from the proper earth beneath.

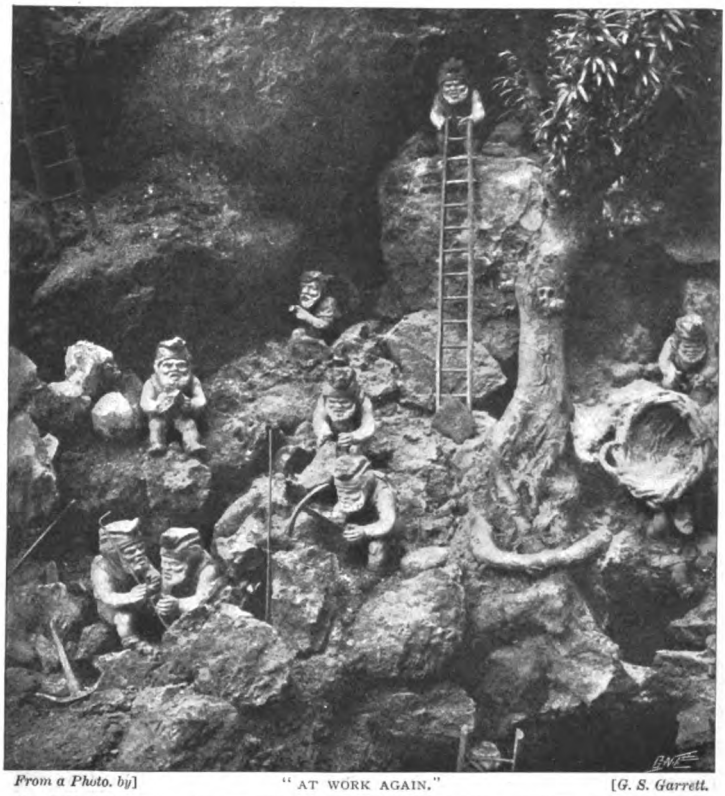
But the list of dwarf vegetation is by no means exhausted when reference has been made to the miniature trees that abound; indeed, the rockery is full of curiosities in the way of plant life. Numerous Alpine plants, procured with much trouble and at great expense, clothe the stones and show themselves through the crevices. One plant, the Agave Utahensis, is fifteen years old, and measures but 5in. in height. It is a very rare specimen of the only hardy American aloe, and is surrounded by variegated dogwood, which adds greatly to the effect. Another plant that spreads itself over a great part of the rockery is shown in the picture in which the miniature trees stand out in contrast. It is the Spider house-leek, whose silvery tones are delightfully pleasing.

Reference might be made to many other interesting plants, but different features of this curious rockery call for mention. Amongst these a number of crystal caves formed of quartz, and which sparkle with dazzling effect when the sun's rays light upon them, are to be found in one corner. But perhaps more than anything else the visitor will carry away the remembrance of the fairy or gnome like figures which people the sides of the rockery or peep from the miniature caves. One seems in looking upon them much like a Gulliver amongst the Liliputians, and a recollection of the weirdness of the scene leads one almost to wonder whether the figures are not the creation of an imaginative fancy. Look at the reality of the picture, "On Strike," and consider the labour involved in the production of figures that so closely harmonize one with another and produce a life-like effect, which was first conceived by the constructor and afterwards worked out with such skilful care. The notice board bearing the inscription :—

Eight hours' sleep,
Eight hours' play,
Eight hours' work,
Eight shillings pay,



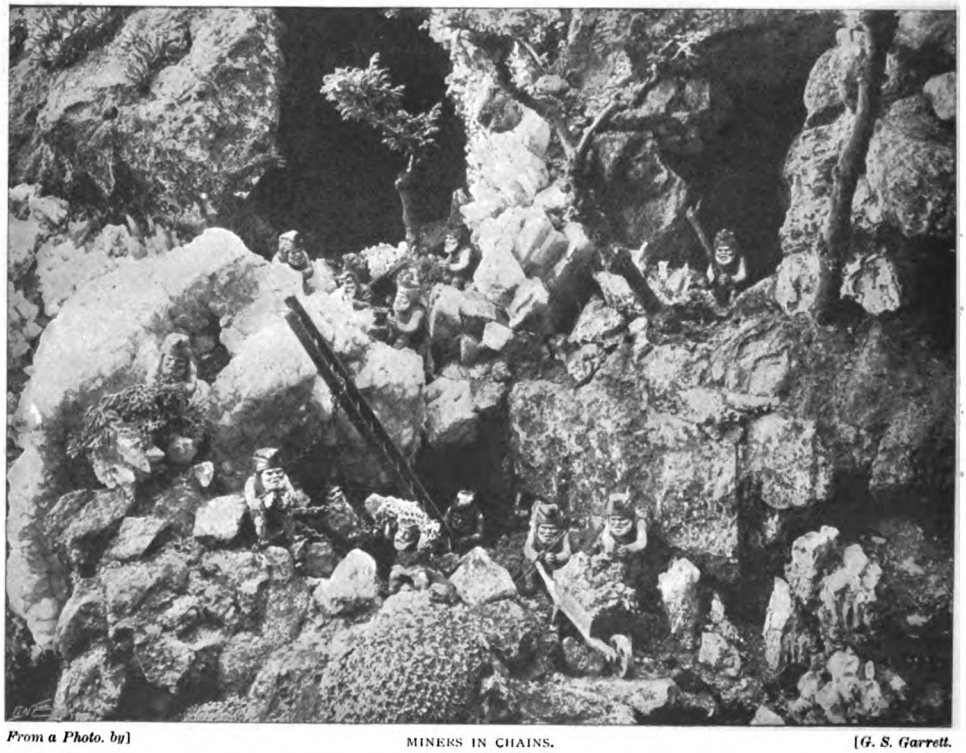
From a Photo. by] "ON STRIKE." *[G. S. Garrett.*



From a Photo. by] "AT WORK AGAIN." *[G. S. Garrett.*

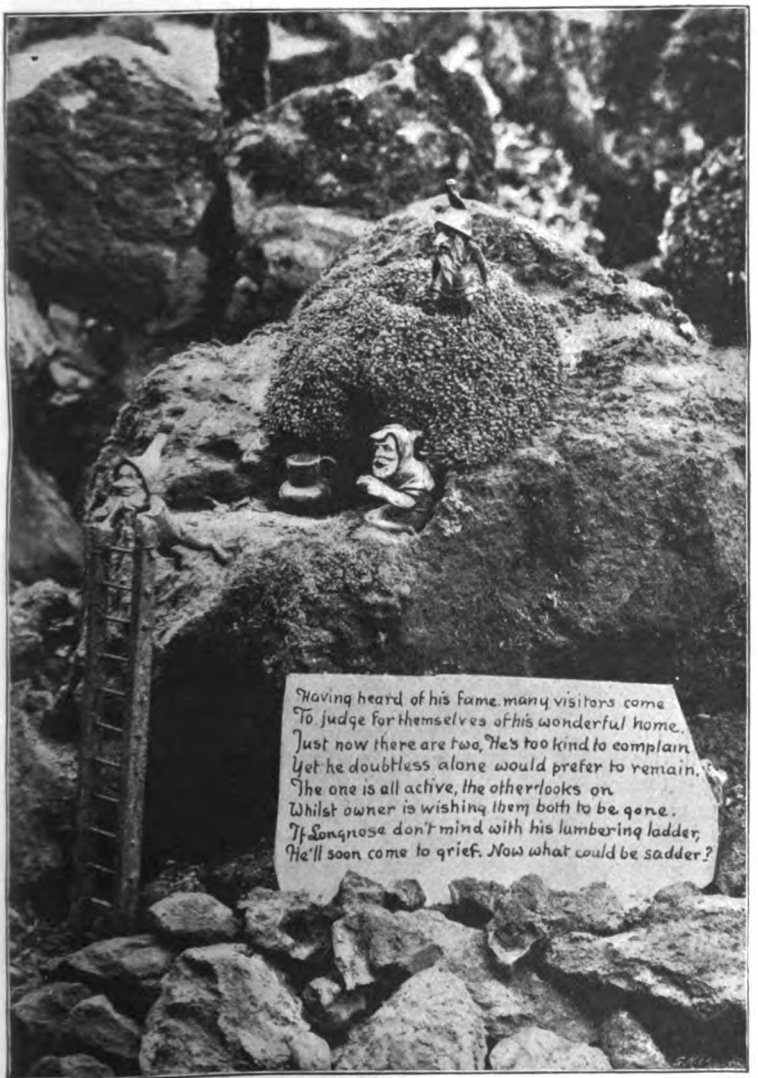
serves to emphasize the Trade Union spirit. It seems that the only person wanted to complete the scene is the paid agitator, unless the little gentleman on the upper ledge, who is dignified by the possession of a hat as compared with the caps of the miners, may be considered as such.

These figures measure from two and a half to three inches in height, and were necessarily extremely difficult to photograph. Mr. G. S. Garrett, by whom the pictures were taken, and to whom the writer is desirous of expressing his best thanks, has succeeded excellently well in his difficult task. He was obliged to use a box, and in some cases a stone,



From a Photo. by] MINERS IN CHAINS. *[G. S. Garrett.*

instead of a camera stand. His lens was placed within a few inches of the figures, and his trouble was to photograph the gnomes without actually enlarging them. In a different part of the rockery is depicted another mining scene—a set of miners, whose demands have evidently been satisfied, and we see some of them at work with pick and shovel, others wheeling barrows or climbing ladders, whilst others sit and smoke the pipe of peace—or laziness. In still another part of the rockery are a number of miners loaded with chains, and who, apparently, have task-masters set over them. Let us hope they exact a full day's work. It is when one comes to criticise the individual figures that the originality of the owner of Lamport is seen. Beneath many of the gnomes poetic descriptions have been placed. One of these inscriptions, which is written upon a piece of paper about the size of an ordinary private envelope, reads :—



From a Photo. by] GNOMES, WITH INSCRIPTION. *[G. S. Garrett.*

Under a saxifrage, beautiful home !
There peacefully rests a diminutive gnome.
His food is pure nectar contained in a jug,
Can any kind friend find a suitable mug?
He dwells in this paradise mostly alone,
With occasional calls of a big drumbedrone.
The saxifrage, tufty and perfectly grown,
May compare with a gem in a setting of stone.

Like many another owner who occasionally allows the public to share in the pleasures of his private possessions, Sir Charles Isham seems to have had some troublesome visitors when he composed the inscription that appears in another illustration :—

Having heard of his fame, many visitors come
To judge for themselves of his wonderful home.
Just now there are two. He's too kind to complain,
Yet he doubtless alone would prefer to remain.
The one is all active, the other looks on,
Whilst owner is wishing them both to be gone.
If Longnose don't mind, with his lumbering ladder,
He'll soon come to grief. Now what could be sadder?

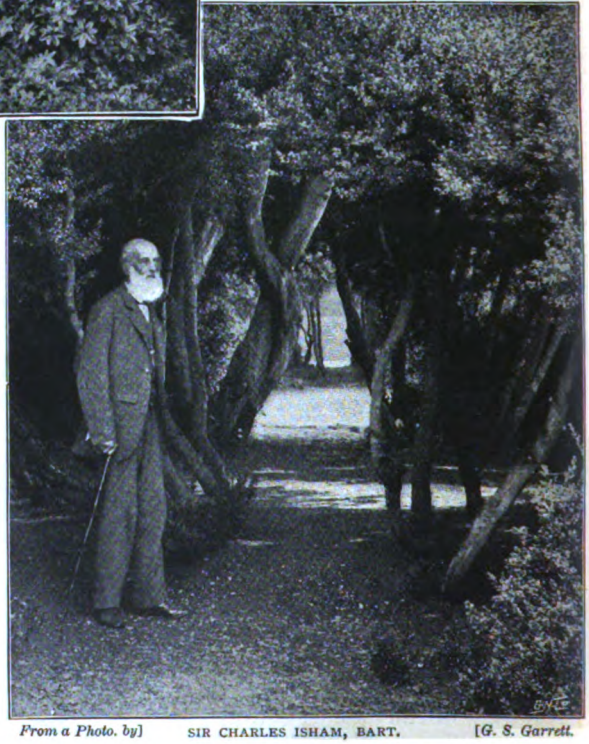
These figures are also 3in. high, and their fairy-like proportions, combined with their surroundings of dwarf trees and miniature caves, compel one to imagine himself in another world.

One figure that graces the rockery, and a

THE LITTLE LADY FROM BRUSSELS.
From a Photo. by G. S. Garrett.

photograph of which is shown on this page, in comparison with the gnomes is as a giantess amongst the pigmies. The contrast is so great that one's attention is immediately arrested, and frequently at a slight distance the impression given is that it is of a living child. The figure was first exposed to public gaze in the Brussels exhibition, from whence it found its way into the shop of a London curio dealer, only to be rescued by Sir Charles Isham to adorn his rockery. Since that time the young lady has been presented with a gorgeous hat and a diamond ring by two interested visitors, and in the picture she may be seen wearing both.

In conclusion, it is only appropriate that a photograph of the painstaking constructor of the unique rockery at Lamport should be reproduced. It shows Sir Charles Isham standing beside one of the box bowers that form another feature of interest at Lamport. They were planted nearly a century and a half ago by Sir Edmund Isham, and with the curiously trained yew trees, and particularly the rock garden, make Lamport one of the most interesting places in England. But the venerable builder will not allow that his work is accomplished, and indicates that the difficulties which beset the man who would imitate him are enormous. To use his own words, "The constructor of the Lamport rockery, being advanced in years and being still a learner in the art of rock gardening, is conscious that what has entailed a period of fifty years of almost daily employment could not be maintained in any approach to its integrity by a new hand."



From a Photo. by] SIR CHARLES ISHAM, BART. *[G. S. Garrett.*

Mere Friends.

By G. M. Robins.

"HAVE another cup—do!" said Miss Arnott. "Don't go yet, this is the nicest time to talk, and I won't light the lamp."

"But I'm paying you such an unconscionable visit," murmured Muriel, softly, as she half guiltily pushed up her cup for some more of that delicious tea which nobody ever made quite like Angela Arnott.

The cup was refilled in a sacred silence, and, when it had been tasted, the hostess murmured, musingly:—

"Well, Muriel, I have thought over what you say, and I tell you again, you are wrong, and you will find it so."

The girl, who sat in the firelight, absently playing with her tea-spoon, was a pretty girl, well dressed, and prosperous looking. Her face was full of capability and eagerness. The woman who was entertaining her was five-and-thirty last birthday. She had never been pretty, but she was very pleasant-looking, although her crisply waving hair was streaked with grey. Her dress was simple, and the tiny room they occupied was one of the three which she possessed in a block of flats for poor ladies. It was the room of a cultivated woman—rich only in books; the big, untidy writing-table, with its bulging pigeon-holes, showed her to be of a literary turn of mind.

"The idea that marriage is a woman's only career is quite exploded," she said. "Look at me: I am neither married, nor pretty, nor even well off, but I am quite happy, and have never wanted for friends."

"Ah, but you have more strength of mind than I," said Muriel. "I don't think that I could be happy in your place, Angela. Forgive me for the candid confession."

Angela looked pityingly at the pretty profile, which the flames now lit up, and now eclipsed. "That feeling soon goes off," she said, in a low voice.

"What feeling?"

"The desire that we are all born with, we women, to be a queen, if only to somebody who lives in a thirty-pound villa in the suburbs."

"To be really first with someone," softly replied Muriel, who spoke in hushed tones, as though the subject were sacred. "To find one's mate, it seems a natural craving; you say it goes off?"

"Oh, yes," rather scornfully. "You soon find that there are so many other forms of happiness in the world, of a much more durable kind."

"Such as?"

"Oh, well, such as a vocation—a career."

Muriel laughed. "That won't do for me, Angela. It is not given to us all to be sub-editors of a scientific journal. I am just one of the common herd, and though I could manage the thirty-pound villa very well, I should do so for the love of the man that dwelt there with me, and no such motive could inspire one with regard to editing a paper."

"There! I catch you out of your own mouth," cried Angela. "What if you did not love the person who shared the villa with you?"

Muriel put down her cup reflectively. "No doubt the thirty-pound villa wants more love than the Mayfair mansion," she said, smiling. "But it is not quite a step of that kind that I am contemplating."

"No, the man is well off," said Angela, musing. "But still, you admit that you do not love him."

"No; but then I don't love anybody else, and never have. I sometimes think that we modern women are too selfish to love anybody properly. We are so much on the look-out for our own happiness that we usually overlook the man's side of the bargain. Why should I expect to have a

faultless man made for me? I'm anything but faultless myself."

"Oh, dear me, Muriel, how can you be so degraded?" cried Angela, in real disgust. "Why, child, your life is your own to do the best you can with—why are you to be content with less than the best? It is better to go without altogether than to accept such a miserable compromise."

"Well," said the girl, after a minute's silence, "you said there were so many forms of happiness in the world other than love; you have only mentioned one, and that's not open to me; tell me another. I assure you that I don't want to put up with inferiority if there seems any reasonable chance of anything better."

"Well . . . . then there's friendship."

Angela's voice softened as she said it, and her sweet grey eyes looked so tenderly into the fire that anyone at that moment would have called her beautiful.

"H'm! Friendship!" echoed Muriel, rather as if the word tasted insipid. "One could not expect anybody to be friends with oneself exclusively."

"Mercy, no! But there must always be a best friend, you know. Every woman is somebody's best friend."

"You are my best friend, Angela, though I don't believe you are giving me good advice this evening; but I don't see exactly how I could make a vocation of you."

There was a little silence; then Angela spoke, in a low, happy voice. "Why should I make a secret of it?" she said. "The friendship which has been so much to me all my life, that I have never felt the want of home or husband, is the friendship of the Professor." Her sweet face was radiant in the fire-light, with a light of which she was absolutely unconscious. "From the day on which I first called upon him, with my little list of personal notes of observation of Nature—and he printed them in *The Student*; to this day when I am sub-editor, and practically in charge of the whole journal under him—he has never failed me. There is a steadiness, an absence of fever and excitement about that friendship, which no marriage would ever give. Passion cools, but friendship grows ever warmer and more proved."

"I FIRST CALLED ON HIM WITH MY LITTLE LIST OF PERSONAL NOTES."

Muriel looked up swiftly into the face of the elder woman—a quick look of consternation and pity. In that moment she felt herself the older and the more experienced. She hesitated a moment. To her it seemed incredible that a woman should be so ignorant of the nature of her own feelings. Should she speak, or be silent? To speak would give pain now, but on the whole it might be kinder in the long run.

"But, Angela," she faltered, "so many things might interrupt such a friendship. The Professor might marry."

Angela's face changed. But her voice when she replied was confident, and still rang with that pathetic note of tenderness.

"I don't think he is likely to marry now; he is quite middle-aged."

Muriel turned round; she was sitting at her friend's feet, and she laid her hands across her knees. "Angela, darling, I hope it would not make any difference to you if he did? Your whole fabric of happiness does not rest on him, does it?"

Angela paused a moment. "Oh, no," she said then, "of course not; of course not, Muriel." Her tone was vaguely apprehensive. "Have you . . . . heard anything . . . . that leads you to suppose . . . .?" she asked, not very lucidly.

There was a silence in the little room which Angela called home. It seemed to Muriel as if everything in it was listening breathless for her next words, and was in secret sympathy with its mistress.

She was in a real difficulty. For years she had known and loved Angela Arnott—had

come to her—as to-day—for advice—which she never took; for years she had suspected that Angela was in love with the Professor, without knowing it. But Angela had never said so; and she was so dignified, so reserved, that it was not easy to guess what she felt.

She had come to the little flat that day in some doubt, for she had heard news which she thought would trouble her friend. But Angela had seemed just as usual; and Muriel wondered. But now it seemed that Angela did not know this news which Muriel had known for several days; and it was strange, for Angela saw the Professor constantly.

"When did you see him last, Angie?" she asked, feeling that her hesitation and confusion were visible.

"I have not seen him for—some days," said Angela, and the girl could hear the tension in her voice as she added, with elaborate carelessness: "Has anything happened to him?"

"Oh, he has gone out of town. But I suppose you knew that. Father does his business for him, you know, and he came in just before he started. Father brought him up to have some tea in the drawing-room, and——"

"And?"

"Well, he didn't say it was a secret," blurted out Muriel, desperately, "so I suppose anybody may know it—he said he was going to be married."

The kettle was good enough to boil over at this juncture; and as Muriel bent over to snatch it from the fire the bell of the little flat tinkled, and its mistress rose.

"A visitor," she said, impatiently. "I must light the lamp, Muriel."

"Let me do it," said the girl, "while you go to the door."

She took the matches from ice-cold fingers, and lit the lamp with eyes blurred with tears.

"He has not dared to tell her," she thought; "he is keeping away. What a wretch I feel; but anything was better than to let her hear it from him for the first time."

Angela came back in a moment, ushering in a voluble little lady who lived in the flat below, and was sure to stay three-quarters of an hour; and Muriel, after a few minutes, took her leave, knowing that there was no chance of any more talk, but cut to the heart by the glimpse she had of Miss Arnott's changed face.

Three hours later Angela sat alone, in the familiar room, staring at the ruins of her life. The fire had gone out: she did not notice it; the unwashed tea-things mutely reproached the mistress who hated untidiness.

She sat so still that her Angora cat looked anxiously into her white face. And, in that stillness, she told herself the truth at last.

She was, after all, a mere woman, in nowise superior to the rest of her sex: for fifteen years she had been in love, and she had not known it until to-night.

She had not known it until it was too late: until the light of her lonely life had been taken away from her. By the pain that tore at her heartstrings, she knew that it was love, not friendship, this fire which for fifteen years had warmed and illumined her hard struggle.

Was the news true? Yes; she knew it. He had told Muriel's mother, there could be no mistake about that; and there was another even more fatal sign: he had not been to see her for a week. Never, for the last ten years, since their friendship grew into such a solid thing, had she passed a week without seeing him, except when he had gone into Germany to visit his relations. But now it was all changed.

She looked at the big, shabby wicker-chair which had so often supported his capacious form; she looked at the photo. of his strong, ugly face, in its carved frame over the mantelpiece. He was going to be married. How often he had told her that he could not afford to marry.

She had no tears; tears were for when the emotions were stirred: this was a splitting of the very bed-rock of being. Weeping seemed an impossibility.

And, as she sat alone, while the clock pointed to nine, and she had had no supper, there sounded at the outer door the tap she knew so well. He had come . . . he had come at last . . . to tell her!

Silently, with parched lips, she thanked Muriel, who had warned her. She was strong to meet him, and she could hear what he had to tell without letting him guess her pitiful secret.

That false sense of degradation which a woman feels who loves without return overwhelmed her as she went to the door and let him in.

"Ah! Mein Engel! You haf nobody with you? That is goot! I must, first of all, say how it comes that I leave you so long without a word. You haf wonder where I haf been? Eh?"

"Yes," said Angela, quietly, as she fol-

lowed him into the untidy, comfortless room, "I have wondered at not seeing you."

"Ah!" he chuckled, in a tone of satisfaction, "I haf news for you, Engelein—news!"

She stood up straight in front of him, her large eyes fixed on his face; she looked very white and frail. "I know your news . . . . I have heard. I . . . . congratulate you, from the bottom of my heart."

"Ah!" he looked half-disappointed. "I had rather myself haf told you; but no matter. I had to go down to the country; it was so sudden, I just pencil you a note to say I go; and like the old fool I am, I leave dat note on my table, and find it when I come back to-night. Here it is, in proof that I tell you the truth."

She took the little note from him, and laid it down on the table behind her without opening it. "You have always told me the truth."

"Ach, no, Engel, not always. The truth between you and me might have spoiled our so beautiful friendship," he tenderly said; and every pulse in the woman's body seemed to start into anguish at the words. Oh, had he treated her fairly? Should he not have told her, have let her know that she was only second best?

"Well," she said, bravely, "it is pleasant to hear you call our friendship beautiful, now that it must end."

"Yes," he said, and a shadow fell upon his face. "It must end now. Are you afraid that you will miss it, Engel? But is not that a woman's fear, that friendship must be killed when one feels the stronger passion? I should like to think that it will not end—only enter upon a new stage."

She turned away, with a laugh that trembled on the very edge of those tears she had thought so impossible; and the boundless selfishness of man struck her with a fiery pang. She felt that to stand there facing him a minute longer was not possible. She began to pile together the dirty tea-things, with quick, deft touches, saying, as she did so:—

"Sit down, in your own chair—for the last time, I suppose!"

"Yes," he answered, thoughtfully, as he sat down heavily. "I shall miss this little room; I have had some most happy hours here; but it would not do now, would it?"

"No," said the woman, softly; "it would not do now."

She carried away the tea-things into the minute kitchen and came back with some wood. Kneeling before the black grate, she began to arrange the fuel, and her occupation gave her courage to say, in a voice not too hopelessly unlike her own:—

"You have not told me to whom you owe this—this—good fortune. I mean—who is—the—lady?"

"Ah," he said; "I told you in the note—the note that never reached you. It is old Mrs. Woodsome, the rich old lady of whom I so often speak to you."

Angela was almost paralyzed with astonishment. Good heavens! The man was simply despicable! She repeated after him, as if she were stupefied: "Mrs. Woodsome!"

"Yes." The Professor settled himself in his chair, and, leaning back, stared up at the ceiling with a smile, as at some very pleasant remembrance. "Old Mrs. Woodsome was always very fond of me," he said, with a voice of triumph. "But I did not think—no, Engel, I did not think that her partiality would go to such an extent!"

Her fingers trembled as she arranged the fuel and struck a light. She had a curious feeling that it was a little funeral pile to which she put the match—a suttee. For she was, after all, not a superior person, but

"HER FINGERS TREMBLED AS SHE ARRANGED THE FUEL."

only just the merest woman, who had staked her all upon one man—and lost it! For he was just—contemptible!

"But you are silent, Engel," he vehemently said, leaning forward in his chair, with a beaming face. "You haf congratulate me, but so formal"—he looked wistfully at her. "Haf you noting more to say to me—noting more about this great news, that means so much to you and me?"

So much! Ah, yes, it did mean much to her: and she had so little! In the bleak world she had kept one faith—her faith in this man, and he was going to marry a rich old woman for her money; and sat there exulting over it in his simple way.

Angela rose from her hearthrug, and stood before him, wiping her blackened fingers on a duster.

"You tell me that you have not always kept the truth for me," she said, "but I have always said to you exactly what I meant, and now to-night, for the last time, I am going to use my privilege. How can I congratulate you? What can you expect me to say? You know me better than to suppose that I could approve!" she almost choked. But, no! No! Whatever happened, she vowed to herself that she would not break down. She dropped into a chair, for she was shaking.

"ANGELA STOOD MOTIONLESS, STARING AT HIM."

He looked at her with a sudden fear. "Engel!" he said, sharply, "surely I haf not made a mistake?"

He rose from his chair, and came to where she sat. Stooping down, he took her hand in his, held it, and patted it. In all their previous intercourse he had never offered her the merest semblance of a caress; now, to-night—had his degradation caused him so to deteriorate already?

She drew her hand away. "You must be the only judge of whether you have made a mistake," she replied. "Except as a friend, it is no concern of mine, of course. It concerns Mrs. Woodsome. If she approves——"

"She did approve," he broke in, gently. "She knew of my intention. I told her before she died."

Angela bounded from her seat. "Before she died! . . . . Is she dead?"

He stared at her. "Engel, you haf been over-working in my absence," he said, severely. "What do you mean? You say you know my news—that the kind, old, rich lady haf died and left me all her fortune, and now you start up and cry, 'Is she dead?' as though you know noting of it before."

"It was not that—not that I heard," she could hardly speak—"it was that you were going to be married."

"And so I thought I was," he gravely answered; "and so I am if Engel will take me; but I seem to have offended her."

Angela stood motionless, staring at him as if he were an apparition.

"Mein Engel," said the big man, tenderly, "to haf spoken to you of love, while I was too poor to become your husband, that was not to me a right thing. Now I am thankful that I was always able to act the part of the old, safe friend. But, Angela, I haf been your lover for fifteen years, and I do not think you haf suffered. That was what I aimed at—to save you suffering; of what it cost me now and then we will not speak. But it cannot be that I haf loved you so long for you to insult me by supposing that I would marry the rich old woman?" He held her cold hands in his. "After all, it is my fault," he said. "I am the old blunderer who never sent the letter. It was to tell you that she was dying, and had sent for me, and that when I came back it would be to tell you some good news. Now, if you can put up with the old Professor, pack up your things, mein liebchen, and say 'good-bye' to the little flat. We haf been happy here, Engel, but we will be happier in our own home together for all our future. Nein, nein, beloved, you must not weep; you must smile! Because our friendship is to endure for ever!"

*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

STAMPS OF GREAT FACE VALUE.

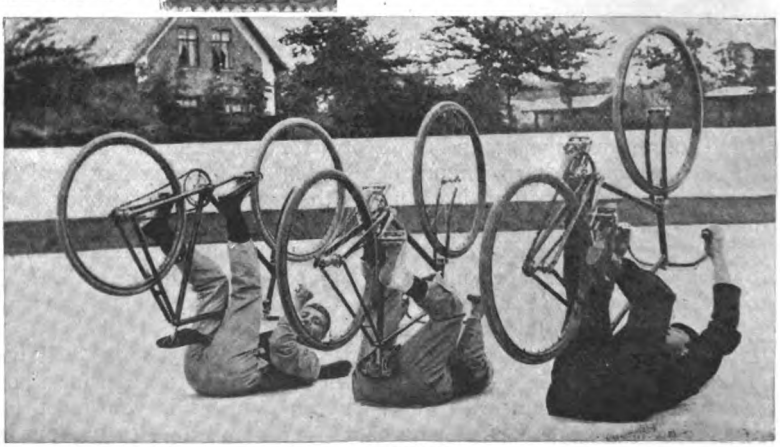
The photographs below are reproductions of real stamps, with portraits of friends introduced in place of the usual or official head. The great feature of the work lies in the fact that the stamp itself affords the negative, and that no dark room or camera is required. Directions: Place a postage stamp face downwards on a piece of sensitive printing paper, slightly larger than the stamp, behind a plain glass in the printing frame. This will be found to give a negative of the stamp, the light penetrating through it exactly as through a glass negative. Tone and fix this print in the usual way. Next paste on the face of this photograph a thin piece of black paper the shape of the part to be hidden, or black out the space with ink. To make the positive reproduce this negative, again face downwards, on a second piece of printing paper. This gives a picture of the stamp with a white patch in the centre. Next take a piece of black paper, in which a hole has been previously cut, the exact shape of this patch, and fasten the positive stamp by strips of gummed paper behind it, so that now only the white patch can be exposed to the light. Finally, take any photographic plate of a group of friends, and select a head to fit the patch, looking through the plate on the stamp to adjust it exactly. Print in this, and fix as usual. The stamp can still be improved by punching holes round it and colouring it with transparent photo. colours. Mons. J. Malandain, of Fécamp, Normandy, sends us the photographs and these instructions.

COMING HOME IN A HURRY.

Major is a careless, happy-go-lucky, do-not-scratch-me-the-wrong-way-up sort of dog. In familiar parlance, there are no flies on Major. At the same time Major is as good as a timepiece. He knows when dinner-time comes round, and strikes out for home in a bee-line. Look at him, caught in the act of jumping his master's front gate. It is a splendid bit of jumping, even for a deer-hound. Mr. Alan C. Ewart is the proud owner of this clever dog.

HOW TO KEEP FIT IN BAD WEATHER.

Here is a splendid prescription, and the way to take it is fully shown in this extraordinary photograph. When the roads are wet and miserable, and when the east wind threatens to freeze your toes and fingers, the best way to keep in training for the track is to do as these enthusiasts did, and you will never go out of form. Mr. L. J. Jessop, Effingham House, Strand, W.C., sends this curious photograph.



* Copyright, 1900, by Geo. Newnes, Limited.

SHOOTING THE SHUTES.

The little boys of Bristol, R.I., are certainly not behind the times. They have seen regular and approved shutes, and not having any water or boat at their disposal, they used the only available material at hand, namely, two ladders. These are each 25ft. long, and are placed on a deep slant, and with the rungs of the ladders well greased the young builders can shoot the whole length in little more than a second. Mr. Chas. Perry snapped young Raymond Brightman, one of the originators of the scheme, in the actual act of shooting this novel shute.

A REMARKABLE WATCH.

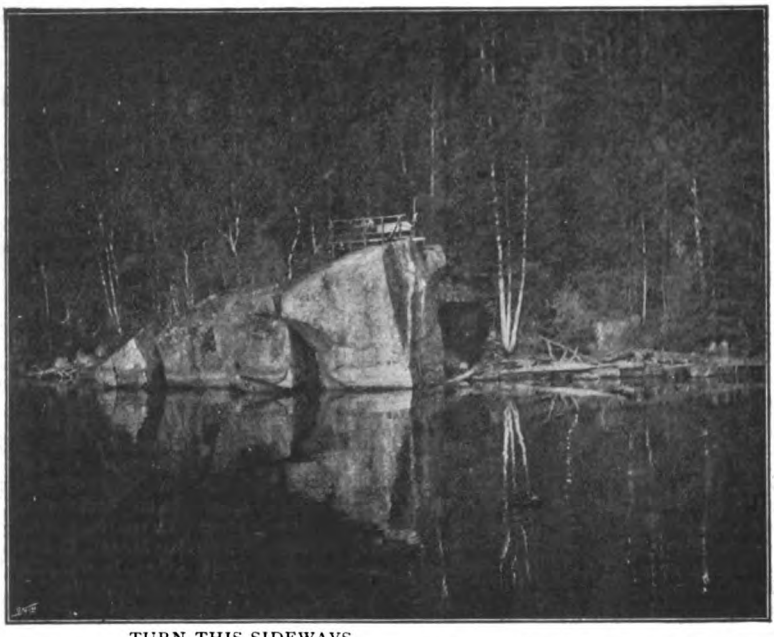
Mr. John Spears, of Corfield, B.C., in sending the next photo., gives the following details: "I submit for your curiosity department a photograph of what I may call a whole lump of Nature built in the inside of a watch-case, with the aid only of a naked eye and such tools as a penknife and a pair of scissors, a pin, etc. The photograph is not very well taken, and so does not give a very good idea of the original, which is built of wood, straw, pebbles, paper, moss, etc., in **colours true to Nature.** The bridge, which does not show up well in the photograph, consists of forty separate pieces—the sills, piles, planking, hand-rails, stays, etc.—and is a perfect facsimile of hundreds of small bridges to be found in this country. The fencing and step-ladder contain thirty-eight pieces of fine straw. There are also several little people to be discerned in the model. To make the model required the spare time of about three months.

GREAT FRIENDS.

Here is one of the most charming snap-shots that we have seen for a long time. It represents a dog with a live mouse on his nose. The picture requires no further explanation: it is yet another instance of remarkable animal friendships, such as were illustrated in THE STRAND some months ago. The photo. was taken by Mr. H. E. Barns, of 45, London Road, West Croydon.

FIVE MILLION DOLLARS IN SIGHT!

This picture shows five million dollars' worth of crude and finished gold bricks. It was taken at the principal weighing-rooms in the Assay Office Refinery in Wall Street, N.Y. This is an unusual quantity to be out of the vaults at one time, and, therefore, against the rules to allow others in the room than the superintendent-cashier and chief weigher. We are indebted to Mr. J. H. Adams for our unique photo.



TURN THIS SIDEWAYS.

If you follow the advice you will be startled by the sudden apparition of a water god's smiling face. This, moreover, is not a "freak," but a genuine and curious case of extraordinary reflection in still water. The picture was taken at Willoughby Lake, a summer resort in Vermont, and the reflection is called locally the Devil's Face.

A SANTA CLAUS REINDEER.

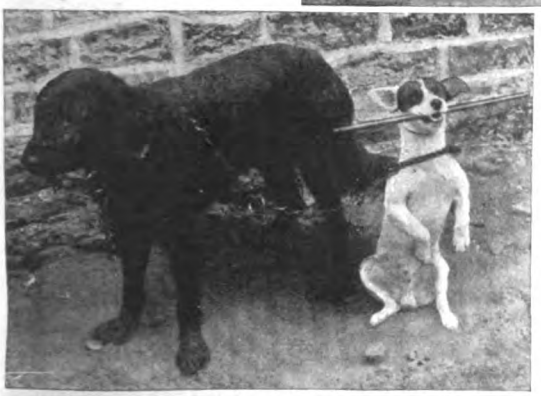
The docile animal shown below is intended as a caricature upon a Santa Claus reindeer. This monstrosity was produced as follows: the body was made of an old-fashioned Dash churn, large end in front, to which was fitted a small butter bowl, the neck and head being shaped from stove-pipe irons. Goggles served as eyes, spice scoops as ears, and the antlers were cut from bright tin, the legs were made from conductor pipe fitted and tacked to the churn, while butter stamps did duty as hoofs; at the rear end of the churn was fastened a small file and wash-dish, through the top of which a hole was bored and a whisk broom inserted for a tail. The body was first covered with sacking of jute stuffed with fine curled wood shavings to form the hump, and the surface covered with frayed rope glued on. Mr. A. N. Doxser, of Angola, Iowa, was the constructor of this animal, and used it as a holiday advertising attraction. This photo. was sent by Mr. W. R. Tilton, Prairie Depôt, Ohio.

SHOOTING A NILE CATARACT.

Here is another kind of shoot from that shown on the previous page. The black boy so cleverly snap-shotted by Lukas Ritter von Dobrzauski, of Galicia, Austria, is taken in the act of shooting the first Nile cataract, sitting astride on the log of a tree. It is a performance that requires a good deal of nerve and some notion of equilibrium.

NOT A SEA-SERPENT STORY!

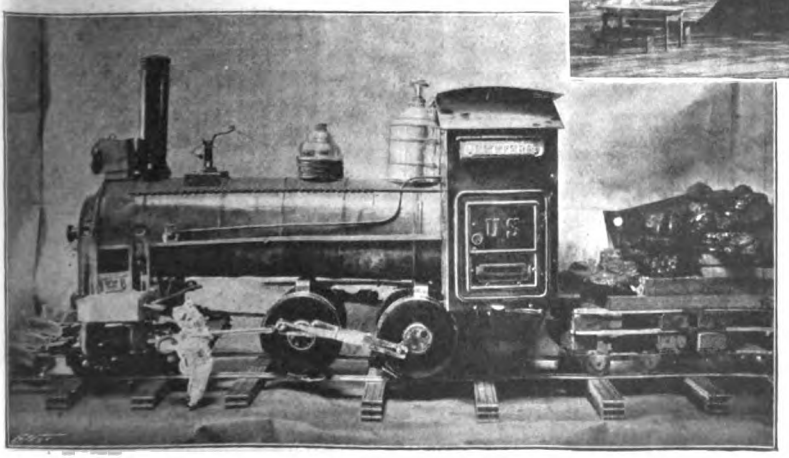
Mr. R. Charles Fernandez, in sending the photograph which is reproduced below, gives the following interesting particulars: "I send you herewith a photograph taken by an amateur snap-shotter of my dog Jack, which, though seated on its hind legs with a stick in its mouth, is fast asleep! Jack was enjoying such a sound sleep in the position shown,



it did not even know when its distant relative (the black dog on the left) was chained to its collar."

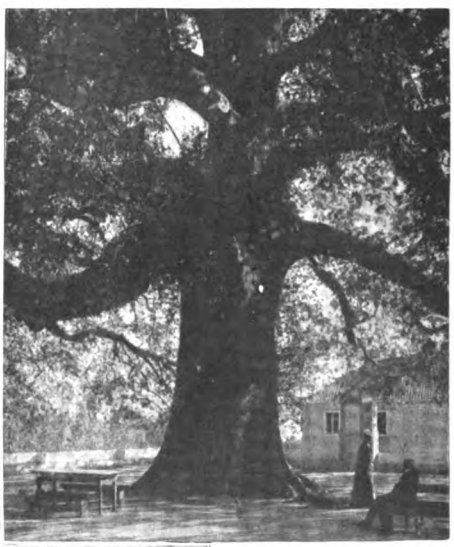
AN EXTRAORDINARY RAILWAY ENGINE.

Mr. R. W. Maynard, of San José, California, sends this peculiar specimen, which can be best described by giving its parts and counterparts as follows: Pocket compass, headlight; whip, smoke stand; roll of brass sheeting, boiler; screw-box, steam chest; fancy box cornices, cow-catcher; 3ft. rule, foot-plank; oil-cans, steam and sand dome; 75ft. tape linen, driving-wheels; two letter-boxes, cab; auger-bit case, coal truck; brass door tracks, rails; 2ft. carpenter's rules, railway ties. This clever bit of work has been done by Mr. Charles Rankel.



THE FIRST SAFETY BICYCLE.

This machine was invented and constructed by Mr. George Shergold, of New Street, Gloucester, in the year 1876. The front wheel is 27in. in diameter, and the rear wheel 27in., geared to 45in. The rims are of angle-iron, with inch solid rubber tyres. The chain is of 2in. pitch, and the spokes ¼in. diameter. The hubs are of wood, with iron side-plates, and are actually oil-retaining, the principle being the same as in the latest barrel-hubs, which were "discovered" and put on the market quite recently. The brake, too, is quite up-to-date, being, in fact, the direct ancestor of the patent frictionless roller which is now so much in vogue. It is actuated by turning the handles on their horizontal axis, thereby tightening a chain which causes a revolving drum to press against the tyre of the back wheel. The pedals are of the rat-trap variety, with a tread of 10in., and the bicycle complete —including the lamp, which, as will be seen, forms no unimportant feature—weighs just under 80lb. The photo. was taken by Mr. Wareing, of Gloucester, the owner of the machine.



THE CHAMPION PLANE TREE.

This remarkable tree —a photo. of which we reproduce, and which was taken by Lukas Ritter von Dobrzauski, of Galicia, Austria—grows in Cannosa, near the villa of Count Gozze. It takes ten persons with outstretched arms to encircle its trunk, and the circular shade is about sixty yards in diameter.

THE VERY HEIGHT OF MODESTY.

Mr. Alan Owen, of San Francisco, is responsible for the statement that the trousers owned by the horse shown here exhibit the deference of the animal's owner to that form of New England modesty that drapes the legs of a piano. The gentleman in question, however, when approached on the subject, answered with the monosyllable, "Flies!"

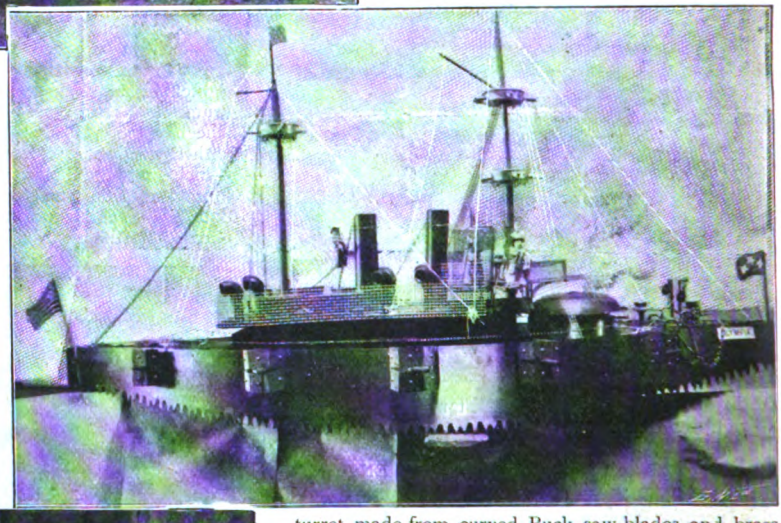
KISSING THE BLARNEY STONE.

This is not a photo.

of Joseph's brethren lowering him into the pit, nor is it a party of murderers disposing of their victim. It is a British tourist, of his own free will and purpose intent on being lowered to kiss the Blarney Stone. The operation requires some nerve, but there is really little danger. The gentleman on the left foreground has just gone through the same operation; you will notice he is minus jacket and vest—a very necessary precaution when there is money in the pockets. Mr. R. J. MacDermott, of Worthing, sends this amusing photo.

DEWEY'S FLAGSHIP.

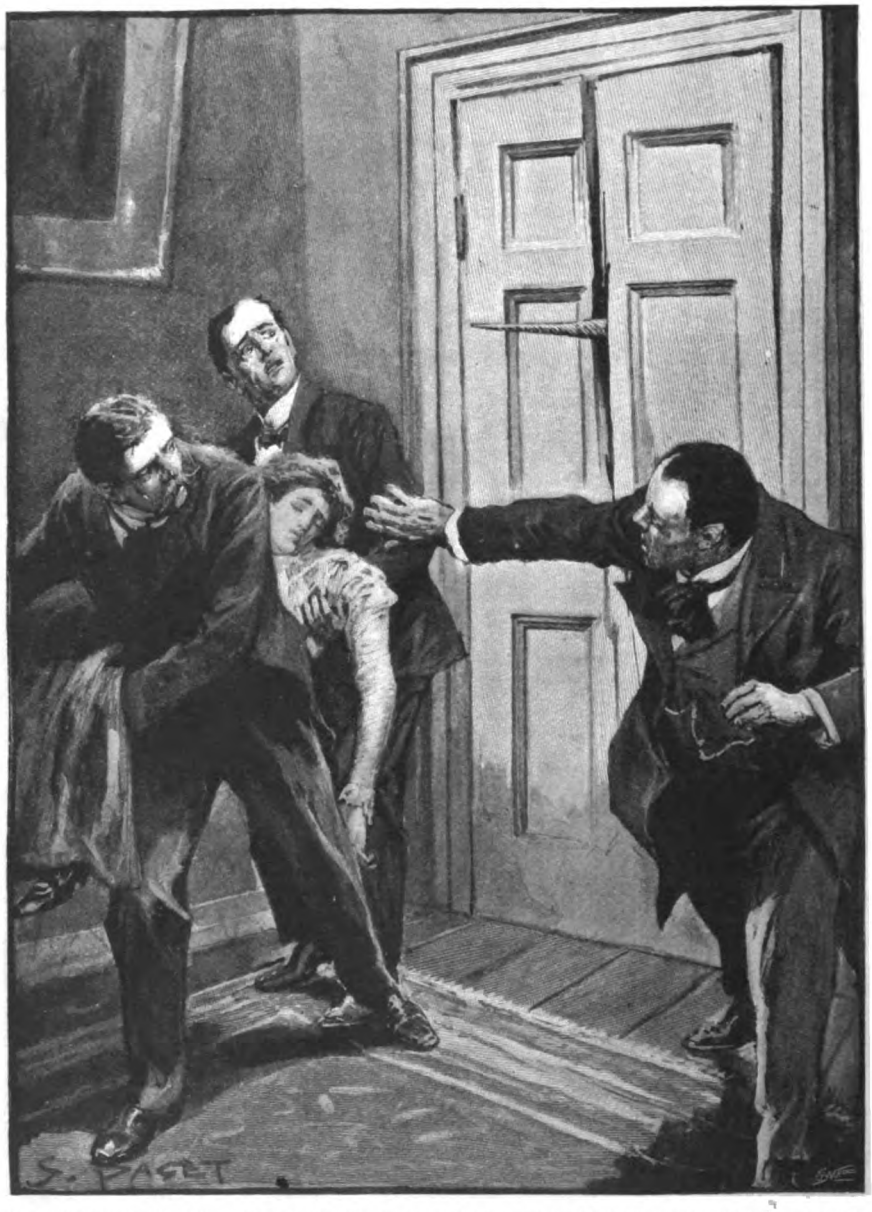
Here is another interesting experiment made by Mr. Charles Rankel, of San José, California. The various parts are given as: large guns in turret from two brass water-nozzles; anchors from two screw-hooks; floor of bridge from pocket rules and brass bracket; sides of the bridge or pilot-house from wire popcorn baskets; hull from two 7ft. cross-cut saws; side ports for guns from brass hinges; small guns from wooden tubes used in repairing rubber water-hose; masts made from popcorn basket handles; fighting tops made from inverted tin mouse-traps; smoke-stacks made from two rolls brass sheeting; air funnels made from water-pipe elbows; front



turret made from curved Buck saw-blades and brass gong; large guns made from two brass water-nozzles.

DOGS WERE DECEIVERS EVER.

Mr. A. G. Long's dog is, we fear, a bit of a masquerader. He would make us believe that he is actually blessed—or otherwise—with a splendid pair of horns. This, however, is only a little of the dog's own fun. He has appropriated a pair of ram's horns, which he carries about with all the seriousness necessary to mark the joke a huge success. This clever dog lives in Hay, South Wales.



"ANOTHER CRASH, AND SOMETHING SHOT THROUGH THE RIVEN DOOR."

(*See page* 250.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xix. MARCH, 1900. No. 111.

Playing with Fire.

BY A. CONAN DOYLE.

I CANNOT pretend to say what occurred upon the 14th of April last at No. 17, Badderly Gardens. Put down in black and white, my surmise might seem too crude, too grotesque, for serious consideration. And yet that something did occur, and that it was of a nature which will leave its mark upon every one of us for the rest of our lives, is as certain as the unanimous testimony of five witnesses can make it. I will not enter into any argument or speculation. I will only give a plain statement, which will be submitted to John Moir, Harvey Deacon, and Mrs. Delamere, and withheld from publication unless they are prepared to corroborate every detail. I cannot obtain the sanction of Paul Le Duc, for he appears to have left the country.

It was John Moir (the well-known senior partner of Moir, Moir, and Sanderson) who had originally turned our attention to occult subjects. He had, like many very hard and practical men of business, a mystic side to his nature, which had led him to the examination, and eventually to the acceptance, of those elusive phenomena which are grouped together with much that is foolish, and much that is fraudulent, under the common heading of spiritualism. His researches, which had begun with an open mind, ended unhappily in dogma, and he became as positive and fanatical as any other bigot. He represented in our little group the body of men who have turned these singular phenomena into a new religion.

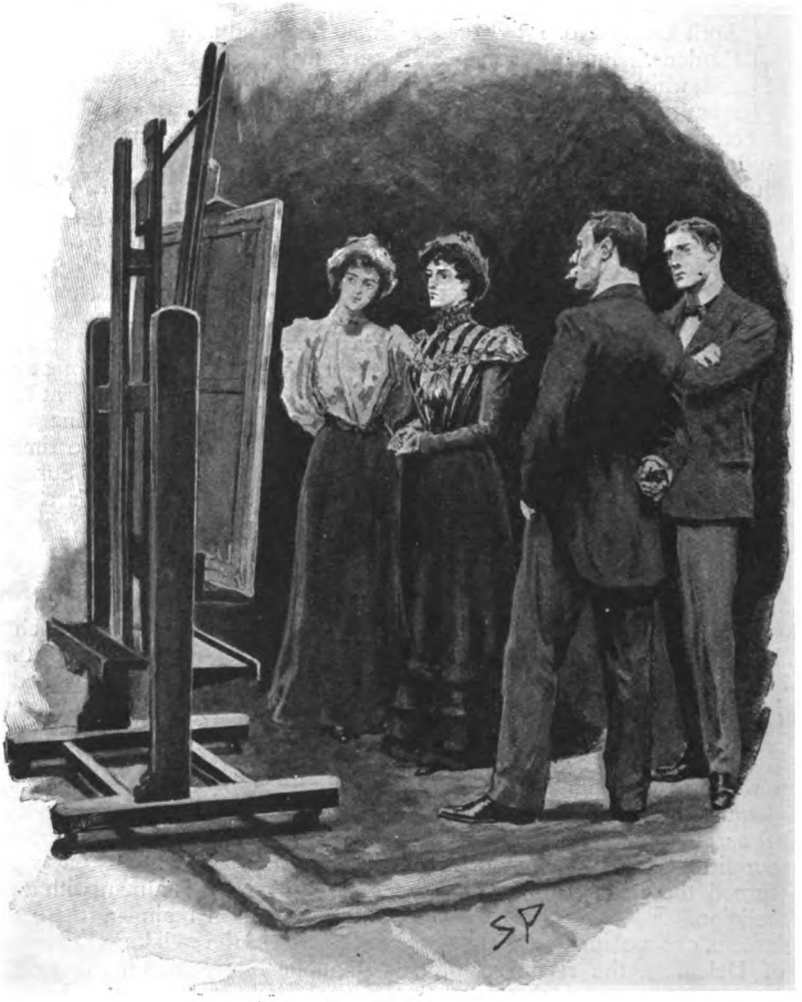
Mrs. Delamere, our medium, was his sister, the wife of Delamere, the rising sculptor. Our experience had shown us that to work on these subjects without a medium was as futile as for an astronomer to make observations without a telescope. On the other hand, the introduction of a paid medium was hateful to all of us. Was it not obvious that he or she would feel bound to return some result for money received, and that the temptation to fraud would be an overpowering one? No phenomena could be relied upon which were produced at a guinea an hour. But, fortunately, Moir had discovered that his sister was mediumistic—in other words, that she was a battery of that animal magnetic force which is the only form of energy which is subtle enough to be acted upon from the spiritual plane as well as from our own material one. Of course, when I say this, I do not mean to beg the question; but I am simply indicating the theories upon which we were ourselves, rightly or wrongly, explaining what we saw. The lady came, not altogether with the approval of her husband, and though she never gave indications of any very great psychic force, we were able, at least, to obtain those usual phenomena of message-tilting which are at the same time so puerile and so inexplicable. Every Sunday evening we met in Harvey Deacon's studio at Badderly Gardens, the next house to the corner of Merton Park Road.

Harvey Deacon's imaginative work in art would prepare anyone to find that he was an ardent lover of everything which was *outré* and sensational. A certain picturesqueness in the study of the occult had been the quality which had originally attracted him to it, but his attention was speedily arrested by some of those phenomena to which I have referred, and he was coming rapidly to the conclusion that what he had looked upon as an amusing romance and an after-dinner entertainment was really a very formidable reality. He is a man with a remarkably clear and logical brain—a true descendant of his ancestor, the well-known Scotch professor—and he represented in our small circle the critical element, the man who has no prejudices, is prepared to follow facts as far as he can see them, and refuses to theorize in advance of his data. His caution annoyed Moir as much as the latter's robust faith amused Deacon, but each in his own way was equally keen upon the matter.

And I? What am I to say that I repre-

sented? I was not the devotee. I was not the scientific critic. Perhaps the best that I can claim for myself is that I was the dilettante man about town, anxious to be in the swim of every fresh movement, thankful for any new sensation which would take me out of myself and open up fresh possibilities of existence. I am not an enthusiast myself, but I like the company of those who are. Moir's talk, which made me feel as if we had a private pass-key through the door of death, filled me with a vague contentment. The soothing atmosphere of the séance with the darkened lights was delightful to me. In a word, the thing amused me, and so I was there.

It was, as I have said, upon the 14th of April last that the very singular event which I am about to put upon record took place. I was the first of the men to arrive at the studio, but Mrs. Delamere was already there, having had afternoon tea with Mrs. Harvey Deacon. The two ladies and Deacon himself were standing in front of an unfinished picture of his upon the easel. I am not an expert in art, and I have never professed to understand what Harvey Deacon meant by his pictures; but I could see in this instance that it was all very clever and imaginative, fairies and animals and allegorical figures of all sorts. The ladies were loud in their praises, and indeed the colour effect was a remarkable one.



"THE LADIES WERE LOUD IN THEIR PRAISES."

"What do you think of it, Markham?" he asked.

"Well, it's above me," said I. "These beasts—what are they?"

"Mythical monsters, imaginary creatures, heraldic emblems—a sort of weird, bizarre procession of them."

"With a white horse in front!"

"It's not a horse," said he, rather testily—which was surprising, for he was a very good-humoured fellow as a rule, and hardly ever took himself seriously.

"What is it, then?"

"Can't you see the horn in front? It's a unicorn. I told you they were heraldic beasts. Can't you recognise one?"

"Very sorry, Deacon," said I, for he really seemed to be annoyed.

He laughed at his own irritation.

"Excuse me, Markham!" said he; "the fact is that I have had an awful job over the beast. All day I have been painting him in and painting him out, and trying to imagine what a real live, ramping unicorn would look like. At last I got him, as I hoped so when you failed to recognise it, it took me on the raw."

"Why, of course it's a unicorn," said I, for he was evidently depressed at my obtuseness. "I can see the horn quite plainly, but I never saw a unicorn except beside the Royal Arms, and so I never thought of the creature. And these others are griffins and cockatrices, and dragons of sorts?"

MONSIEUR PAUL LE DUC.

"Yes, I had no difficulty with them. It was the unicorn which bothered me. However, there's an end of it until to-morrow." He turned the picture round upon the easel, and we all chatted about other subjects.

Moir was late that evening, and when he did arrive he brought with him, rather to our surprise, a small, stout Frenchman, whom he introduced as Monsieur Paul Le Duc. I say to our surprise, for we held a theory that any intrusion into our spiritual circle deranged the conditions, and introduced an element of suspicion. We knew that we could trust each other, but all our results were vitiated by the presence of an outsider. However, Moir soon reconciled us to the innovation. Monsieur Paul Le Duc was a famous student of occultism, a seer, a medium, and a mystic. He was travelling in England with a letter of introduction to Moir from the President of the Parisian brothers of the Rosy Cross. What more natural than that he should bring him to our little séance, or that we should feel honoured by his presence?

He was, as I have said, a small, stout man, undistinguished in appearance, with a broad, smooth, clean-shaven face, remarkable only for a pair of large, brown, velvety eyes, staring vaguely out in front of him. He was well dressed, with the manners of a gentleman, and his curious little turns of English speech set the ladies smiling. Mrs. Deacon had a prejudice against our researches and left the room, upon which we lowered the lights, as was our custom, and drew up our chairs to the square mahogany table which stood in the centre of the studio. The light was subdued, but sufficient to allow us to see each other quite plainly. I remember that I could even observe the curious, podgy little square-topped hands which the Frenchman laid upon the table.

"What a fun!" said he. "It is many years since I have sat in this fashion, and it is to me amusing. Madame is medium. Does madame make the trance?"

"Well, hardly that," said Mrs. Delamere. "But I am always conscious of extreme sleepiness."

"It is the first stage. Then you encourage it, and there comes the trance. When the trance comes, then out jumps your little spirit and in jumps another little spirit, and so you have direct talking or writing. You leave your machine to be worked by another. *Hein?* But what have unicorns to do with it?"

Harvey Deacon started in his chair. The Frenchman was moving his head slowly round and staring into the shadows which draped the walls.

"What a fun!" said he. "Always unicorns. Who has been thinking so hard upon a subject so bizarre?"

"This is wonderful!" cried Deacon. "I have been trying to paint one all day. But how could you know it?"

"You have been thinking of them in this room."

"Certainly."

"But thoughts are things, my friend. When you imagine a thing you make a thing. You did not know it, *hein?* But I can see your unicorns because it is not only with my eye that I can see."

"Do you mean to say that I create a thing which has never existed by merely thinking of it?"

"But certainly. It is the fact which lies under all other facts. That is why an evil thought is also a danger."

"They are, I suppose, upon the astral plane?" said Moir.

"Ah, well, these are but words, my friends. They are there—somewhere—everywhere—I cannot tell myself. I see them. I could not touch them."

"You could not make *us* see them."

"It is to materialize them. Hold! It is an experiment. But the power is wanting. Let us see what power we have, and then arrange what we shall do. May I place you as I should wish?"

"You evidently know a great deal more about it than we do," said Harvey Deacon; "I wish that you would take complete control."

"It may be that the conditions are not good. But we will try what we can do. Madame will sit where she is, I next, and this gentleman beside me. Meester Moir will sit next to madame, because it is well to have blacks and blondes in turn. So! And now with your permission I will turn the lights all out."

"What is the advantage of the dark?" I asked.

"Because the force with which we deal is a vibration of ether and so also is light. We have the wires all for ourselves now—*hein?* You will not be frightened in the darkness, madame? What a fun is such a séance!"

At first the darkness appeared to be absolutely pitchy, but in a few minutes our eyes became so far accustomed to it that we could just make out each other's presence—very dimly and vaguely, it is true. I could see nothing else in the room—only the black loom of the motionless figures. We were all taking the matter much more seriously than we had ever done before.

"You will place your hands in front. It is hopeless that we touch, since we are so few round so large a table. You will compose yourself, madame, and if sleep should come to you you will not fight against it. And now we sit in silence and we expect ——*hein?*"

So we sat in silence and expected, staring out into the blackness in front of us. A clock ticked in the passage. A dog barked intermittently far way. Once or twice a cab rattled past in the street, and the gleam of its lamps through the chink in the curtains was a cheerful break in that gloomy vigil. I felt those physical symptoms with which previous séances had made me familiar—the coldness of the feet, the tingling in the hands, the glow of the palms, the feeling of a cold wind upon the back. Strange little shooting pains came in my forearms, especially as it seemed to me in my left one, which was nearest to our visitor—due no doubt to disturbance of the vascular system, but worthy of some attention all the same. At the same time I was conscious of a strained feeling of expectancy which was almost painful. From the rigid, absolute silence of my companions I gathered that their nerves were as tense as my own.

And then suddenly a sound came out of the darkness—a low, sibilant sound, the quick, thin breathing of a woman. Quicker and thinner yet it came, as between clenched teeth, to end in a loud gasp with a dull rustle of cloth.

"What's that? Is all right?" someone asked in the darkness.

"Yes, all is right," said the Frenchman. "It is madame. She is in her trance. Now, gentlemen, if you will wait quiet you will see something I think which will interest you much."

Still the ticking in the hall. Still the breathing, deeper and fuller now, from the medium. Still the occasional flash, more welcome than ever, of the passing lights of

the hansoms. What a gap we were bridging, the half-raised veil of the eternal on one side and the cabs of London on the other. The table was throbbing with a mighty pulse. It swayed steadily, rhythmically, with an easy swooping, scooping motion under our fingers. Sharp little raps and cracks came from its substance, file-firing, volley-firing, the sounds of a fagot burning briskly on a frosty night.

"There is much power," said the Frenchman. "See it on the table!"

"Shall we call the alphabet?" asked Moir.

"But no—for we can do much better," said our visitor. "It is but a clumsy thing to tilt the table for every letter of the alphabet, and with such a medium as madame we should do better than that."

"Yes, you will do better," said a voice.

"Who was that? Who spoke? Was that you, Markham?"

"No, I did not speak."

"It was madame who spoke."

"'THERE IS MUCH POWER,' SAID THE FRENCHMAN."

I had thought that it was some delusion of my own, but all could see it now. There was a greenish-yellow phosphorescent light—or I should say a luminous vapour rather than a light—which lay over the surface of the table. It rolled and wreathed and undulated in dim glimmering folds, turning and swirling like clouds of smoke. I could see the white, square-ended hands of the French medium in this baleful light.

"What a fun!" he cried. "It is splendid!"

"But it was not her voice."

"Is that you, Mrs. Delamere?"

"It is not the medium, but it is the power which uses the organs of the medium," said the strange, deep voice.

"Where is Mrs. Delamere? It will not hurt her, I trust."

"The medium is happy in another plane of existence. She has taken my place, as I have taken hers."

"Who are you?"

"It cannot matter to you who I am. I am one who has lived as you are living, and who has died as you will die."

We heard the creak and grate of a cab pulling up next door. There was an argument about the fare, and the cabman grumbled hoarsely down the street. The green-yellow cloud still swirled faintly over the table, dull elsewhere, but glowing into a dim luminosity in the direction of the medium. It seemed to be piling itself up in front of her. A sense of fear and cold struck into my heart. It seemed to me that lightly and flippantly we had approached the most real and august of sacraments, that communion with the dead of which the fathers of the Church had spoken.

"Don't you think we are going too far? Should we not break up the séance?" I cried.

But the others were all earnest to see the end of it. They laughed at my scruples.

"All powers are made for use," said Harvey Deacon. "If we *can* do this, we *should* do this. Every new departure of knowledge has been called unlawful in its inception. It is right and proper that we should inquire into the nature of death."

"It is right and proper," said the voice.

"There, what more could you ask?" cried Moir, who was much excited. "Let us have a test. Will you give us a test that you are really there?"

"What test do you demand?"

"Well, now—I have some coins in my pocket. Will you tell me how many?"

"We come back in the hope of teaching and of elevating, and not to guess childish riddles."

"Ha, ha, Meester Moir, you catch it that time," cried the Frenchman. "But surely that is very good sense what the Control is saying."

"It is a religion, not a game," said the cold, hard voice.

"Exactly—the very view I take of it," cried Moir. "I am sure I am very sorry if I have asked a foolish question. You will not tell me who you are?"

"What does it matter?"

"Have you been a spirit long?"

"Yes."

"How long?"

"We cannot reckon time as you do. Our conditions are different."

"Are you happy?"

"Yes."

"You would not wish to come back to life?"

"No—certainly not."

"Are you busy?"

"We could not be happy if we were not busy."

"What do you do?"

"I have said that the conditions are entirely different."

"Can you give us no idea of your work?"

"We labour for our own improvement and for the advancement of others."

"Do you like coming here to-night?"

"I am glad to come, if I can do any good by coming."

"Then to do good is your object?"

"It is the object of all life on every plane."

"You see, Markham, that should answer your scruples."

It did, for my doubts had passed and only interest remained.

"Have you pain in your life?" I asked.

"No, pain is a thing of the body."

"Have you mental pain?"

"Yes, one may always be sad or anxious."

"Do you meet the friends whom you have known on earth?"

"Some of them."

"Why only some of them?"

"Only those who are sympathetic."

"Do husbands meet wives?"

"Those who nave truly loved."

"And the others?"

"They are nothing to each other."

"There must be a spiritual connection?"

"Of course."

"Is what we are doing right?"

"If done in the right spirit."

"What is the wrong spirit?"

"Curiosity and levity."

"May harm come of that?"

"Very serious harm."

"What sort of harm?"

"You may call up forces over which you have no control."

"Evil forces?"

"Undeveloped forces."

"You say they are dangerous. Dangerous to body or mind?"

"Sometimes to both."

There was a pause, and the blackness seemed to grow blacker still, while the yellow-green fog swirled and smoked upon the table.

"Any questions you would like to ask, Moir?" said Harvey Deacon.

"Only this—do you pray in your world?"

"One should pray in every world."

"Why?"

"Because it is the acknowledgment of forces outside ourselves."

"What religion do you hold over there?"

"We differ exactly as you do."

"You have no certain knowledge?"

"We have only faith."

"These questions of religion," said the Frenchman, "they are of interest to you serious English people, but they are not so much fun. It seems to me that with this power here we might be able to have some great experience—*hein?* Something of which we could talk."

"But nothing could be more interesting than this," said Moir.

"Well, if you think so, that is very well," the Frenchman answered, peevishly. "For my part, it seems to me that I have heard all this before, and that to-night I should weesh to try some experiment with all this force which is given to us. But if you have other questions, then ask them, and when you are finish we can try something more."

But the spell was broken. We asked and asked, but the medium sat silent in her chair. Only her deep, regular breathing showed that she was there. The mist still swirled upon the table.

"You have disturbed the harmony. She will not answer."

"But we have learned already all that she can tell—*hein?* For my part I wish to see something that I have never seen before."

"What then?"

"You will let me try?"

"What would you do?"

"I have said to you that thoughts are things. Now I wish to *prove* it to you, and to show you that which is only a thought. Yes, yes, I can do it and you will see. Now I ask you only to sit still and say nothing, and keep ever your hands quiet upon the table."

The room was blacker and more silent than ever. The same feeling of apprehension which had lain heavily upon me at the beginning of the séance was back at my heart once more. The roots of my hair were tingling.

"It is working! It is working!" cried the Frenchman, and there was a crack in his voice as he spoke which told me that he also was strung to his tightest.

The luminous fog drifted slowly off the table, and wavered and flickered across the room. There in the farther and darkest corner it gathered and glowed, hardening down into a shining core—a strange, shifty, luminous, and yet non-illuminating patch of radiance, bright itself and yet throwing no rays into the darkness. It had changed from a greenish-yellow to a dusky sullen red. Then round this centre there coiled a dark, smoky substance, thickening, hardening, growing denser and blacker. And then the light went out, smothered in that which had grown round it.

"It has gone."

"Hush—there's something in the room."

We heard it in the corner where the light

"THERE WERE TWO STRANGE EYES GLOWING AT US."

had been, something which breathed deeply and fidgeted in the darkness.

"What is it? Le Duc, what have you done?"

"It is all right. No harm will come." The Frenchman's voice was treble with agitation.

"Good heavens, Moir, there's a large animal in the room. Here it is, close by my chair! Go away! Go away!"

It was Harvey Deacon's voice, and then came the sound of a blow upon some hard object. And then . . . . And then . . . . how can I tell you what happened then?

Some huge thing hurtled against us in the darkness, rearing, stamping, smashing, springing, snorting. The table was splintered. We were scattered in every direction. It clattered and scrambled amongst us, rushing with horrible energy from one corner of the room to another. We were all screaming with fear, grovelling upon our hands and knees to get away from it. Something trod upon my left hand, and I felt the bones splinter under the weight.

"A light! A light!" someone yelled.

"Moir, you have matches, matches!"

"No, I have none. Deacon, where are the matches? For God's sake, the matches!"

"I can't find them. Here, you Frenchman, stop it!"

"It is beyond me. Oh, *mon Dieu*, I cannot stop it. The door! Where is the door?"

My hand, by good luck, lit upon the handle as I groped about in the darkness. The hard-breathing, snorting, rushing creature tore past me and butted with a fearful crash against the oaken partition. The instant that it had passed I turned the handle, and next moment we were all outside and the door shut behind us. From within came a horrible crashing and rending and stamping.

"What is it? In Heaven's name, what is it?"

"A horse. I saw it when the door opened. But Mrs. Delamere——?"

"We must fetch her out. Come on, Markham; the longer we wait the less we shall like it."

He flung open the door and we rushed in. She was there on the ground amidst the splinters of her chair. We seized her and dragged her swiftly out, and as we gained the door I looked over my shoulder into the darkness. There were two strange eyes glowing at us, a rattle of hoofs, and I had just time to slam the door when there came a crash upon it which split it from top to bottom.

"It's coming through! It's coming!"

"Run, run for your lives!" cried the Frenchman.

Another crash, and something shot through the riven door. It was a long white spike, gleaming in the lamplight. For a moment it shone before us, and then with a snap it disappeared again.

"Quick! Quick! This way!" Harvey Deacon shouted. "Carry her in! Here! Quick!"

We had taken refuge in the dining-room, and shut the heavy oak door. We laid the senseless woman upon the sofa, and as we did so, Moir, the hard man of business, drooped and fainted across the hearthrug. Harvey Deacon was as white as a corpse, jerking and twitching like an epileptic. With a crash we heard the studio door fly to pieces, and the snorting and stamping were in the passage, up and down, up and down, shaking the house with their fury. The Frenchman had sunk his face on his hands, and sobbed like a frightened child.

"What shall we do?" I shook him roughly by the shoulder. "Is a gun any use?"

"No, no. The power will pass. Then it will end."

"You might have killed us all — you unspeakable fool—with your infernal experiments."

"I did not know. How could I tell that it would be frightened? It is mad with terror. It was his fault. He struck it."

Harvey Deacon sprang up. "Good heavens!" he cried.

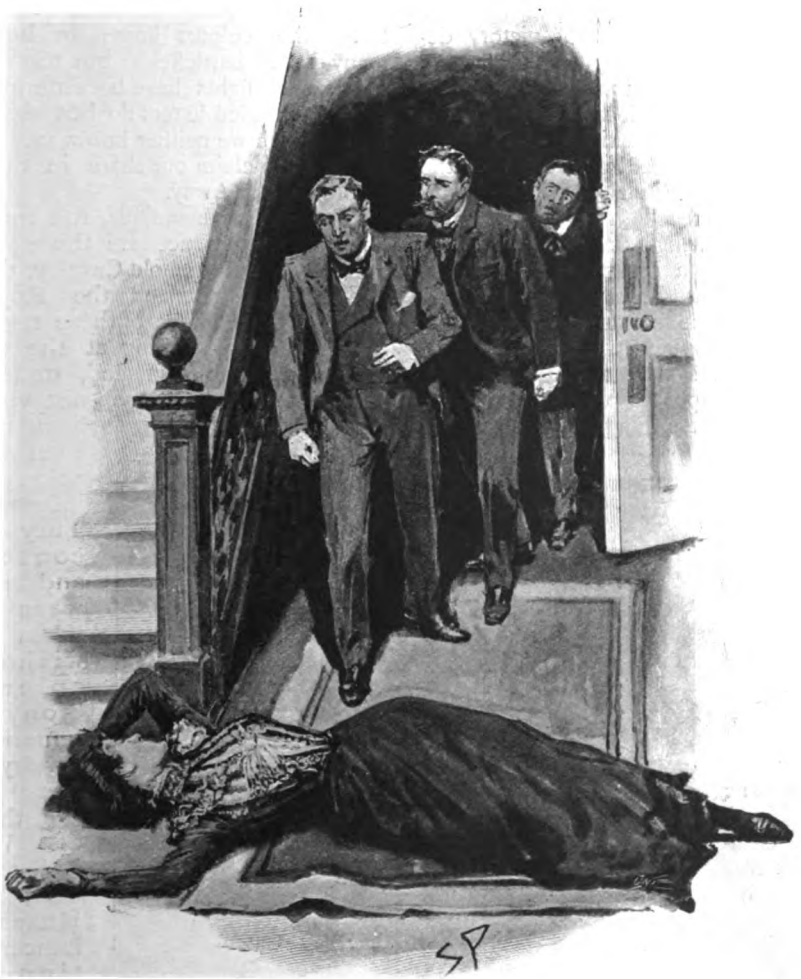
A terrible scream sounded through the house.

"It's my wife! Here, I'm going out. If it's the Evil One himself I am going out!"

He had thrown open the door and rushed out into the passage. At the end of it, at the foot of the stairs, Mrs. Deacon was lying senseless, struck down by the sight which she had seen. But there was nothing else. With eyes of horror we looked about us, but all was perfectly quiet and still. I approached the black square of the studio door, expecting with every slow step that some atrocious shape would hurl itself out of it. But nothing came, and all was silent inside the room. Peeping and peering, our hearts in our mouths, we came to the very threshold, and stared into the darkness. There was still no sound, but in one direction there was also no darkness. A luminous,

glowing cloud, with an incandescent centre, hovered in the corner of the room. Slowly it dimmed and faded, growing thinner and fainter, until at last the same dense, velvety blackness filled the whole studio. And with

began by saying that it would seem too grotesque to dogmatize as to what it was which actually did occur; but I give my impressions, *our* impressions (since they are corroborated by Harvey Deacon and John



"MRS. DEACON WAS LYING SENSELESS."

the last flickering gleam of that baleful light the Frenchman broke into a shout of joy.

"What a fun!" he cried. "No one is hurt, and only the door broken, and the ladies frightened. But, my friends, we have done what has never been done before."

"And as far as I can help it," said Harvey Deacon, "it will certainly never be done again."

And that was what befell upon the 14th of April last at No. 17, Badderly Gardens. I

Moir), for what they are worth. You may if it pleases you imagine that we were the victims of an elaborate and extraordinary hoax. Or you may think with us that we underwent a very real and a very terrible experience. Or perhaps you may know more than we do of such occult matters, and can inform us of some similar occurrence. In this latter case a letter to William Markham, 146M, The Albany, would help to throw a light upon that which is very dark to us.

The Flags of Our Forces at the Front.

By Christabel Osborn

THE depth and passion of the patriotic enthusiasm with which the whole English people have been fired have been in themselves some compensation for the bitterness of victory deferred. It is long since any serious warning has been given to the nation that the glorious record of the past could only be preserved through struggle and sacrifice ; and while our troops in South Africa are facing the enemy, perhaps no better occupation could be found than to recall the stories of some of their hard-fought fights of earlier days.

The colours of a regiment ! A simple phrase, but what a wealth of glorious meaning is bound up in those few words ! Only a bit of embroidered silk, and yet the very soul of the regiment, the symbol of its honour, the record of its triumphs, to preserve which life is counted a worthless thing ! Who is there whose heart has not been moved and fired as he looks at the tattered and war-worn colours which so often hang in our cathedrals and churches; by the memories they recall of glorious deeds and heroic self-sacrifice? The rich crimson damask that marks the cavalry standard, the embroidered roll of battles in which the regiment won an honoured name, the badges and mottoes that recall its history, have alike faded into one general dimness, but still the tattered relics remain, sacred memorials of war, the symbols of a courage and heroism that go far to redeem its savagery and barbarism. There must, indeed, be few who have not felt the "stir of fellowship," alike in victory and defeat, with those who shed their blood to bring the colours home in honour from many distant battlefields; but too often those hard-fought fights have become mere names to us ; the faded letters do but shadow forth a past which we neither know nor love, and we forget to claim our share in the glorious records of our Army.

Of all cavalry standards, the most magnificent in appearance are those which are borne by the Household Cavalry, the 1st and 2nd Life Guards and the Royal Horse Guards. Detachments of these regiments are at the time of writing at the front with Colonel Neal in command, under General French. For some reason not very easy to explain, cavalry standards have never held such an honourable position as infantry colours. They were not consecrated, and new ones were usually taken into use without any solemn ceremony of presentation. No cavalry standards were carried at the Battle of Waterloo, and some years later, in 1834, Hussars and Lancers discontinued using them. In 1858 a regulation was made that all standards should be crimson, and that only one should be borne by each regiment. To this rule, however, the Household Cavalry are an exception.

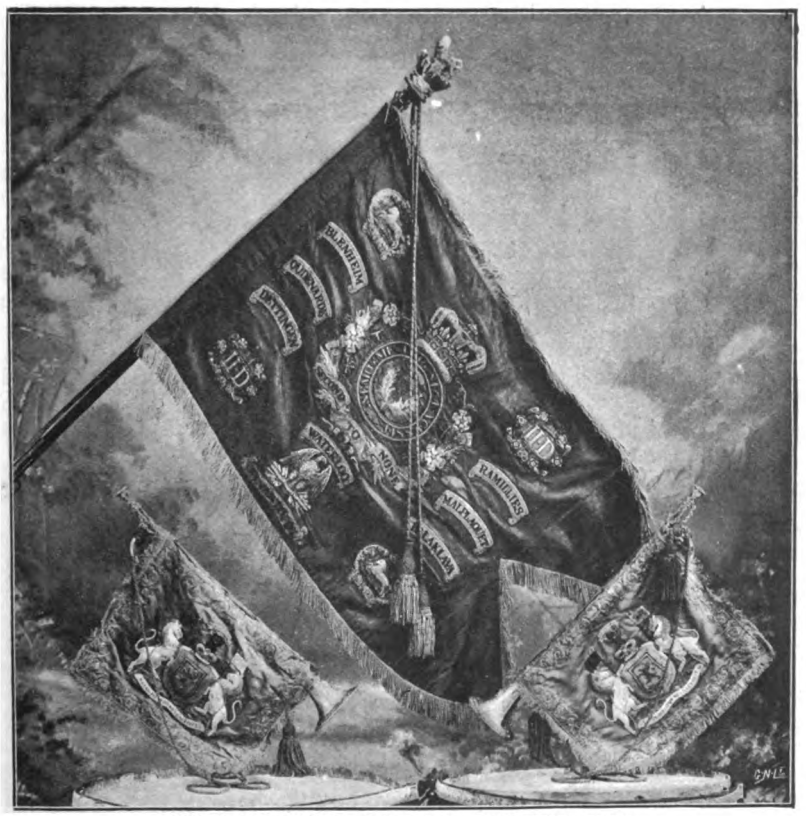
STANDARDS AND TRUMPET BANNERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY.
From a Photograph.

Each regiment has a Queen's standard and three regimental standards, or one for each squadron, all of crimson silk damask. The Queen's standard bears the Royal Arms, and the regimental standard the Union badge of the Rose, Thistle, and Shamrock on one stalk, and the roll of distinctions is embroidered on both. On the trumpet and kettledrum banners it is interesting to note the two angels or winged Cupids supporting the Crown, one on each side. They appeared on the standards as well in the days of James II., and formed part of the Royal Arms of France occasionally adopted by the Stuarts.

The Life Guards and Horse Guards are amongst the oldest corps in the service, their formation dating back, like that of the Grenadier Guards and the Coldstreams, to 1660. They served with distinction in Marlborough's wars, and nearly a century later were maintaining their old reputation in the prolonged Peninsular struggle. At Waterloo, the three regiments, under Lord Edward Somerset, were posted at Mont St. Gean, and their gallantry in repulsing the charges of the French Cuirassiers won them a special meed of praise from the Iron Duke himself. At the close of the battle, indeed, they were so reduced in numbers as to form but a single squadron, but they, nevertheless, joined in the general advance. The bugle with which the decisive charge was sounded is still preserved. Each regiment possesses a pair of silver kettledrums presented by King William IV.

Standards are carried by Dragoon Guards and guidons, or swallow-tailed pennons, by Dragoons. Both bear in the centre the title or badge of the regiment, surrounded by the Union wreath of the Rose, Thistle, and Shamrock. The records of many of the regiments of Dragoon Guards date back to the days of the Revolution.

The famous Union Brigade, which has made itself a name in many a gallant charge, is composed of the three regiments of Dragoons, the Royals, the Scots Greys, and the Inniskillings. There are no prouder or more honoured mottoes in the British Army than those of the Scots Greys—attached to General French's Division. They carry on their guidon: "Second to None" and "Nemo me impune lacessit," and well has the regiment proved its right to bear them. In the mighty battles of Marlborough's wars their service commenced, and at Ramillies they charged through the French Cuirassiers and captured in triumph the famous white standard of the Régiment du Roi. At



GUIDON AND TRUMPET BANNERS OF ROYAL SCOTS GREYS.
From a Photo. by Wyrall & Son, Aldershot.

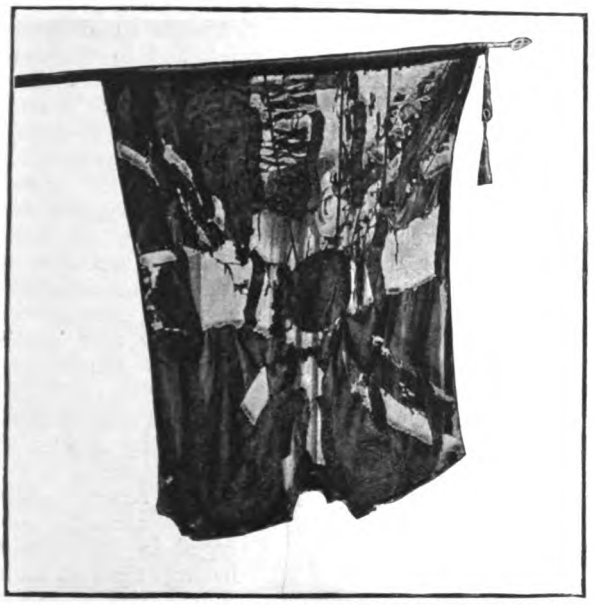
Waterloo the united charge of the Scots Greys and the 92nd Highlanders, and their overthrow of D'Erlon's column, was one of the turning-points of the battle.

REGIMENTAL COLOURS 1ST BATTALION GRENADIER GUARDS.
From a Photo. by George Newnes, Limited.

It was the Grenadier Guards who formed Maitland's Brigade at Waterloo, and it was from their overthrow of the French Grenadier Guards at that battle that they gained their name, and henceforth carried on their colours a grenade beneath the badge. A pair of the colours so honourably carried by a battalion of this regiment at Waterloo are now hanging in the chapel of Wellington Barracks. Nearly forty years later the Guards showed that their mettle was in no way altered during the long fight at Inkerman against overwhelming odds, and are still maintaining the gallant tradition of their regiment on the South African veldt. An additional distinction of the Grenadier Guards is the possession of a State colour, bearing the

Infantry regiments have each a pair of colours. Under Elizabeth each company had a colour of its own, and retained it even after several companies had been united into a regiment. Then came in the custom of drawing up regiments in three divisions, a body of pikemen in the centre, flanked on either side by musketeers; and the number of colours was accordingly reduced to three. Under Queen Anne the pikemen and the third colour disappeared together. At the present time the Royal West Surrey Regiment (2nd Foot) still possesses a third colour, sea-green, like the ancient facings of the corps.

STATE COLOUR 1ST BATTALION GRENADIER GUARDS.
From a Photo. by George Newnes, Limited.



THE BUFF COLOURS 2ND BATTALION OXFORDSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY.
From a Photo. by George Newnes, Limited.

Royal cipher, reversed and interlaced, a colour which was first presented to them by William IV. The 1st Battalion, Windsor, the 2nd Battalion, Wellington Barracks, and the 3rd Battalion form part of the Guards' Brigade under Colville with Methuen. Their gallant conduct in the battles along Kimberley Road is well known.

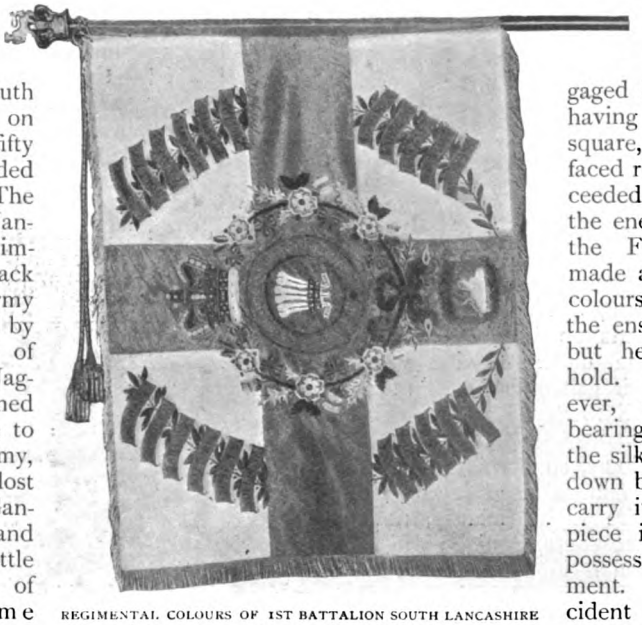
The buff colours, so often carried to victory by the famous 52nd (2nd Battalion Oxfordshire Light Infantry, now stationed at Ferozepore, Punjab; whilst the 1st Battalion is in South Africa, in General Kelly-Kenny's Division), the "regiment never surpassed in war since arms were first borne by men," have now become white. One of the old colours, with its long roll of honours, still hangs in the banqueting-room at Whitehall, now the home of the United Service Institution. What deeds of daring are recalled by every name! Ciudad Rodrigo, where the 52nd and the 43rd furnished the storming party, and the forlorn hope; Waterloo, where the 52nd drove back the far-famed Imperial Guard, under the great Ney himself, with such success that as the Prussians advanced in pursuit their bands played the National Anthem in compliment to the troops, and a Prussian officer rode forward and embraced the colours in token of his admiration. Other names of honour have been added since then, notably Delhi, recalling the heroic storming of the Cashmere Gate, a deed of daring perhaps never surpassed in war.

Side by side with the colours of the 52nd hang those of the 66th (2nd Battalion Berkshire Regiment), serving with General Gatacre, and taking part in his famous night march which ended so disastrously. Their colours bear the record of many hard-fought fights, above all, Albuhera, in memory of the fiercest and most sanguinary of all the Peninsular battles. There the King's Colour of the Buffs (3rd Foot) was only saved by the heroism of Lieutenant Latham, who snatched it when the ensign was taken prisoner, and, though wounded and trampled on, managed to conceal it underneath him, until the advance of the Fusilier Brigade drove back the enemy. There, too, the 57th (18th Battalion Middlesex Regiment) won their nickname of the "Die-hards." Their Colonel, Inglis, who was leading the advance, was wounded, but refusing to be carried to the

PORTION OF THE COLOURS OF 1ST BATTALION MIDDLESEX REGIMENT.
From a Photo. by Albert Coe, Norwich.

rear, he maintained his position in front of the colours, calling to the men to "Die hard." They obeyed his command. When the fatal hill was won one officer and sixty-eight men were left unwounded to gather round the shattered remnants of the King's Colour, which had been riddled by more than thirty balls. The memory of such a deed of valour has served as an inspiration to the regiment in other hard struggles, and at Inkerman Captain Stanley rallied his men with the words: "Die-hards, remember Albuhera."

The wild hills and dangerous passes of Afghanistan have seen many heroic struggles. During the disastrous retreat from Cabul in 1842, of which only Dr. Brydon arrived to tell the tale at Jellalabad, out of 682 men of the 44th (1st Battalion Essex Regiment, now with Gatacre in South Africa) at Cabul on October 1st, but fifty survived, wounded and prisoners. The retreat began in January, and almost immediately the attack commenced, the army marching harassed by the incessant fire of the Ghilzais. At Jagdallak a determined attempt was made to beat off the enemy, when the 44th lost 200 men. At Gandamuk the last stand was made. On a little hill the survivors of the 44th, some seventy-five in number, yet held out against an overwhelming force of Afghans for two hours, till their ammunition was expended. Lieutenant Soutar was one of the few who escaped death. He had wrapped the regimental colour round his body, and being struck down in the fight, the colour was exposed to view. It was thought by the Afghans to indicate high rank, and he was carried off a prisoner. He was able to retain the colour, and when the avenging force arrived it was brought back to India, where it was carried for some time by a newly-recruited 44th, and was finally placed in the Church of Alverstoke, Hants, over a monument erected to the officers and men who fell in that fatal campaign. The Queen's colour was intrusted to Sergeant Carey, but he was killed, and in the confusion of a night march the colour was lost.



REGIMENTAL COLOURS OF 1ST BATTALION SOUTH LANCASHIRE REGIMENT. *From a* [*Photograph.*

It was not the first time that the 44th had fought well in an unequal battle. In the Peninsular they received the nickname of the "Little Fighting Fours," and on the retreat from Burgos they formed the rear-guard and were reduced to forty-two men of all ranks fit for duty. It was on this occasion a sergeant of the regiment came to an officer and said: "Sir, the mules and camp-kettles are lost, but as I am the only man of the company left, it is not of much consequence."

At Quatre Bras the regiment was attacked by a force of lancers in the rear, when already engaged in front. Not having time to form square, the rear rank faced round and succeeded in beating off the enemy. Some of the French lancers made a dash for the colours and wounded the ensign in the eye, but he retained his hold. A lancer, however, succeeded in bearing off a piece of the silk, but was shot down before he could carry it off, and the piece is still in the possession of the regiment. A similar incident of the rear rank of a regiment successfully facing round and repulsing the enemy occurred in the case of the 28th Foot (Gloucestershire Regiment) in the Egyptian campaign of 1801. Both battalions are serving in South Africa. Part of the 1st is attached to General Clery's Division, and a part is in Ladysmith at the moment of writing. The 2nd Battalion of this famous regiment serves under Lieut.-General Kelly-Kenny. In honour of this exploit, until 1881 the 28th wore their regimental number on the back as well as the front of their head-dress.

Not a few of the special privileges of many regiments have arisen from some brilliant feat of arms on the battlefield. On the

anniversary of Waterloo the men of the 1st Battalion South Lancashire Regiment (the Prince of Wales's Volunteers, the old 40th), which forms part of General Woodgate's Brigade in Sir Charles Warren's Division, wear a laurel leaf and deck the colours with wreaths, for on that day fourteen sergeants besides officers were killed and wounded in their defence, and the silk was almost shot away. Indeed, the regiment was so reduced in numbers that by the time the Prussians came up it had become difficult to form square. For many years the 40th had the honour of bearing on their colours more victories than any other single battalion regiment.

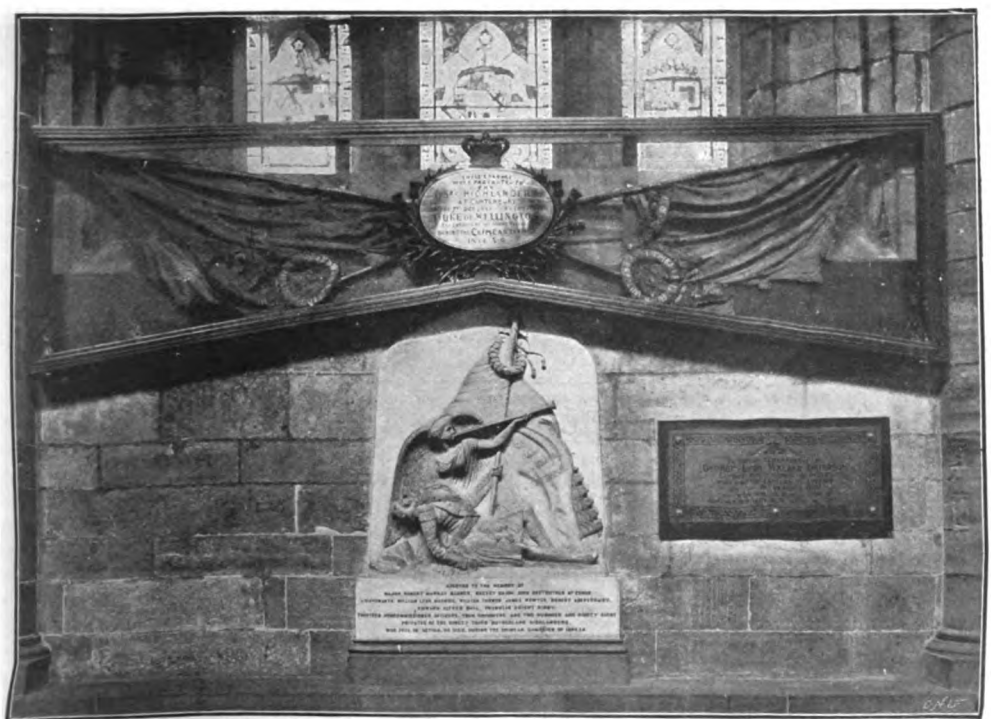
Every infantry regiment took its colours into the Crimea. At the halt before the assault on the heights of Alma the staff were riding along the front of the troops, by whom they were received with thundering cheers, and Marshal St. Amand exclaimed: "English, I hope you will fight well to-day!" "Hope!" exclaimed a voice from the ranks of the 55th. "Sure you *know* we will."

The 55th (2nd Battalion Border Regiment) formed part of the 1st Brigade of the fighting division under General Pennefeather, and suffered severely both at Alma and Inkerman. The 2nd Battalion Border Regiment, the old 34th, did not arrive in the Crimea till December, 1854. The first colours to wave on the great redoubt at Alma were those of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, which had been presented to the regiment by the Prince Consort. The lieutenant was shot down, but others took his place, and so gallant was their action that General Sir George Brown, who was leading the advance, called out: "Hurrah for the Royal Welsh! I shall remember you!" He himself was wounded and fell from his horse, but mounted again immediately, with the assistance of a rifleman, who in all the din and excitement of the battle yet found time to ask: "Are your stirrups the right length, sir?"

The Royal Welsh, as everyone knows, forms part of the Fusilier Brigade under Major-General Barton, serving with Buller in Natal.

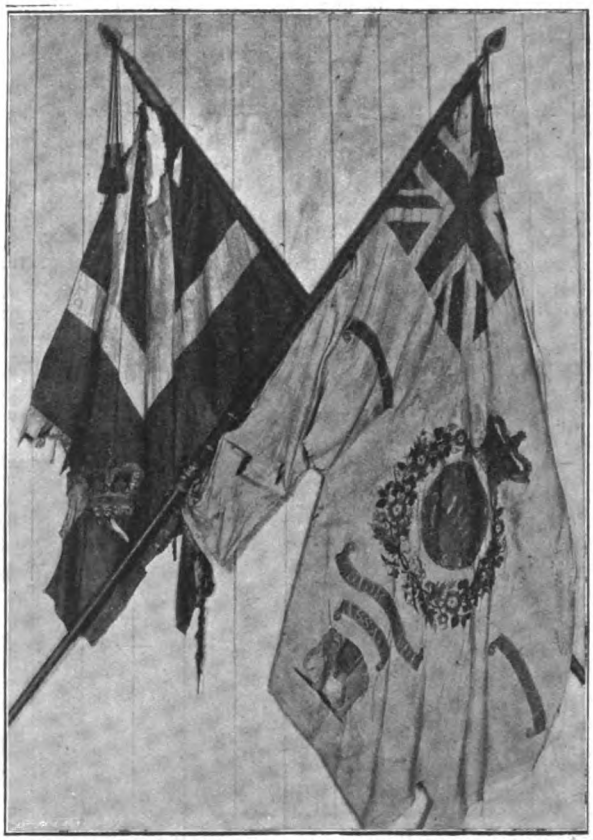
At Inkerman the Grenadier Guards took their colours to the sandbag battery, where they remained the whole morning, and the colours of the 21st (Royal Scots Fusiliers) were only removed from the field by Lord Raglan's orders, after three officers and seventeen sergeants had fallen in escorting them.

The colours carried by the 93rd Sutherland



From a Photo. by] COLOURS OF THE 93RD HIGHLANDERS. *[Bell & Co., Glasgow.*

Highlanders throughout the Crimean campaign, and which had been presented to the regiment by the Duke of Wellington, have now received a honoured place in Glasgow Cathedral. The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (the old 93rd) have contributed their quota to the South African War, inasmuch as the 1st Battalion is in South Africa with Major-General Pole-Carew's brigade under Lord Methuen. It is the only infantry regiment entitled to record the name of Balaclava on its colours. As the Russian cavalry advanced to the attack in heavy columns, Sir Colin Campbell called to the Highlanders, "There is no retreat from here, men! You must die where you stand!" and the answer came back, "Aye, aye, Sir Colin, and needs be, we'll do that!" They did not alter their formation, but received and repulsed the charge standing only two deep—the "thin red line."



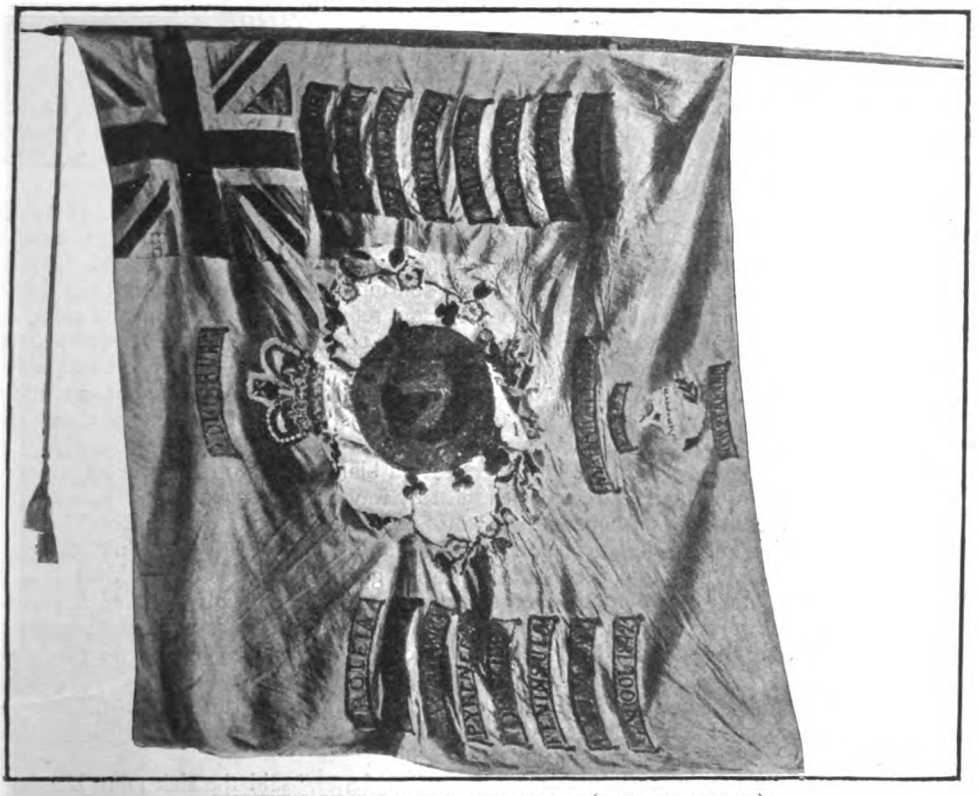
COLOURS OF 78TH (THE ROSS-SHIRE BUFFS)—NICKNAMED "THE SAVIOURS OF INDIA."
From a Photo. by J. Munroe, Dingwall.

From the frosts and snows of the Crimea they were soon to find themselves under the burning sun of India, making forced marches, with the same general in command, to bring relief to beleaguered Lucknow. And it was another Scottish regiment, the 78th (the Ross-shire Buffs) which received the name of the "Saviours of India." They also marched to Lucknow in the vanguard of Sir Henry Havelock's relief column, and the colours they carried through that splendid advance are still to be seen in the Town Hall at Dingwall. But there is not one of the Highland regiments the name of which does not recall some heroic story to the mind, and it is but a few weeks since the Black Watch (42nd Highlanders) have been adding fresh honour to the roll. They will ever be remembered as having followed their beloved Wauchope up the trenches at Magersfontein, and to have stood unflinchingly before the withering hail of bullets which decimated their ranks.

The Castle and the Key, the arms of Gibraltar, are carried on the colours of several regiments in recognition of their services there in 1704. The Sphinx, superscribed "Egypt," marks the regiments who served under Abercrombie in 1801; and the Royal Marines wear a laurel badge in memory of the capture of Belle-Isle in 1761. This regiment shares with the Buffs the privilege of being able to march through the City of London with drums beating and colours flying, a privilege that may arise from the fact that both are sometimes thought to have been first recruited from the train-bands of the City.

The 13th (1st Battalion Somersetshire Regiment), which endured the siege of Jellalabad under Sir Robert Sale, carry in honour of their brave defence a mural crown on their colours, with the word "Jellalabad." The circlet of a mural crown is decorated with battlements: it was given by the Romans to the man who first scaled the walls of a besieged city. The 2nd Battalion of this famous regiment is in Major-General Clery's Division.

Whole volumes would be required to tell in detail the story of all the famous names



REGIMENTAL COLOURS OF THE 40TH REGIMENT (2ND SOMERSETSHIRE).
From a Photo. by J. Wyrall & Son, Aldershot.

emblazoned on regimental colours, and of all the blood-stained laurels gained by British soldiers in every quarter of the world. It may be, perhaps, that after years of peace and prosperity a time of stress and storm is coming once again for England, and, like our forefathers of old, we may have to face a world in arms. But, whatever the odds against us, our national character must indeed have changed if we ever consent to sink below the standard they have set. There is no doubt that our soldiers will display the same unflinching courage which has always marked them; but, perhaps, there may be need to see that as a nation we have not degenerated through our long enjoyment of all the material advantages of peace, and prove we can not only rise for a moment to an outburst of patriotic enthusiasm, but that we also possess the same dogged perseverance which alone can bear the pressing strain and painful sacrifices of a prolonged war, and the same resolution not to recognise our own defeat which has so often led us to victories in the past.

Those great deeds are half-forgotten now: the records are hidden away in regimental histories: the colours are fading in our churches; but if ever we feel a thrill of pride in the greatness of our Empire or in the noble place held by our national flag, let us remember too "how vast the debt we owe to those who died."

Never the lotos closes, never the wildfowl wake,
But a soul went out on the east wind that died for England's sake—
Man or woman or suckling, mother or bride or maid—
Because on the bones of the English, the English flag is stayed.

NOTE.—I cannot conclude this article without acknowledging my great obligations to the commanding officers of many regiments and to other possessors of historic colours, by whose kindness alone it has been possible to procure the special photographs with which it is illustrated.

Jimmy's Big Brother From California.

By Bret Harte.

AS night crept up from the valley that stormy afternoon Sawyer's Ledge was at first quite blotted out by wind and rain, but presently re-appeared in little nebulous star-like points along the mountain side as the straggling cabins of the settlement were, one by one, lit up by the miners returning from tunnel and claim. These stars were of varying brilliancy that evening, two notably so—one that eventually resolved itself into a many-candled illumination of a cabin of evident festivity; the other into a glimmering taper in the window of a silent one. They might have represented the extreme mutations of fortune in the settlement that night: the celebration of a strike by Robert Falloner, a lucky miner; and the sick bed of Dick Lasham, an unlucky one.

The latter was, however, not quite alone. He was ministered to by Daddy Folsom, a weak but emotional and aggressively hopeful neighbour, who was sitting beside the wooden bunk whereon the invalid lay. Yet there was something perfunctory in his attitude: his eyes were continually straying to the window, whence the illuminated Falloner festivities could be seen between the trees, and his ears were more intent on the songs and laughter that came faintly from the distance than on the feverish breathing and unintelligible moans of the sufferer.

Nevertheless, he looked troubled equally by the condition of his charge and by his own enforced absence from the revels. A more impatient moan from the sick man, however, brought a change to his abstracted face, and he turned to him with an exaggerated expression of sympathy.

"In course! Lordy! I know jest what those pains are: kinder ez ef you was havin' a tooth pulled that had roots branchin' all over ye! My! I've jest had 'em so bad I couldn't keep from yellin'! That's hot rheumatics! Yes, sir, *I* oughter know! And" (confidentially) "the sing'ler thing about 'em is that they get worst jest as th'y're going off—sorter wringin' yer hand and punchin' ye in the back to say 'Good-bye.' There!" he continued, as the man sank exhaustedly back on his rude pillow of flour-sacks. "There! didn't I tell ye? Ye'll be all right in a minit, and ez chipper ez a jay bird in the mornin'. Oh, don't tell *me* about rheumatics—I've bin thar! On'y mine was the cold kind—that hangs on longest—yours is the hot, that burns itself up in no time."

If the flushed face and bright eyes of Lasham were not enough to corroborate this symptom of high fever, the quick, wandering laugh he gave would have indicated the point of delirium. But the too optimistic Daddy Folsom referred this act to improvement, and went on, cheerfully: "Yes, sir, you're better now, and"—here he assumed an air of cautious deliberation, extravagant, as all his assumptions were—"I ain't sayin' that—ef—you—was—to—rise—up" (very slowly) "and heave a blanket or two over your shoulders—jest by way o' caution, you know—and leanin' on me, kinder meander over to Bob Falloner's cabin and the boys, it wouldn't do you a heap o' good. Changes o' this kind is often prescribed by the faculty." Another moan from the sufferer, however, here apparently corrected Daddy's too favourable prognosis. "Oh, all right! Well, perhaps ye know best; and I'll jest run over to Bob's and say how as ye ain't comin', and will be back in a jiffy!"

"The letter," said the sick man, hurriedly, "the letter, the letter!"

Daddy leaned suddenly over the bed. It was impossible for even his hopefulness to avoid the fact that Lasham was delirious. It was a strong factor in the case—one that would certainly justify his going over to Falloner's with the news. For the present moment, however, this aberration was to be accepted cheerfully and humoured after Daddy's own fashion. "Of course—the letter, the letter," he said, convincingly; "that's what the boys hev bin singin' jest now.

> Good-bye, Charley; when you are away,
> Write a letter, love; send me a letter, love!

That's what you heard, and a mighty purty song it is too, and kinder clings to you. It's wonderful how these things gets in your head."

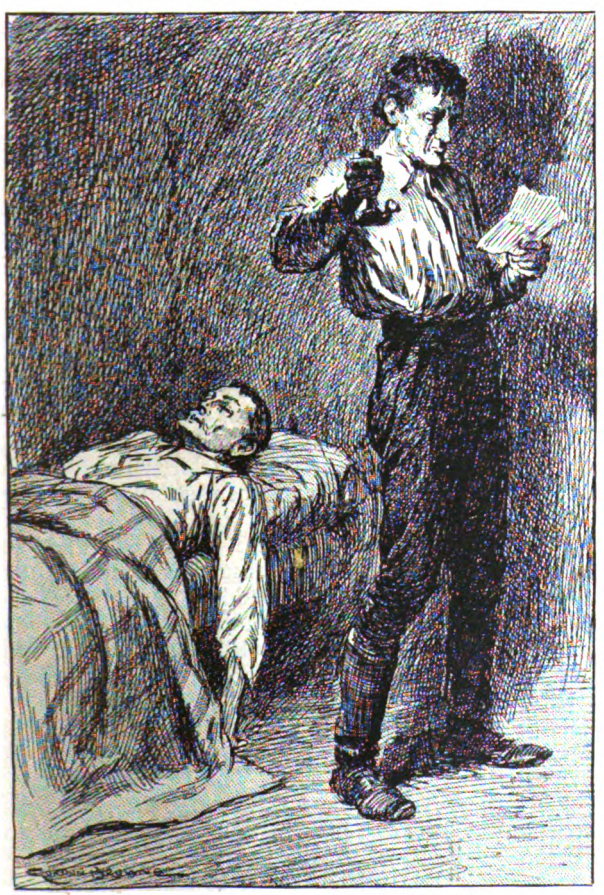
"The letter!—write—send money—money—money, and the photograph—the photograph—photograph—money," continued the sick man, in the rapid reiteration of delirium.

"In course you will—to-morrow—when the mail goes," returned Daddy, soothingly; "plenty of them. Jess now yer try to get a snooze, will ye? Hol' on!—take some o' this."

There was an anodyne mixture on the rude shelf which the doctor had left on his morning visit. Daddy had a comfortable belief that what would relieve pain would also check delirium, and he accordingly measured out a dose with a liberal margin to allow of waste by the patient in swallowing in his semi-conscious state. As he lay more quiet, muttering still, but now unintelligibly, Daddy, waiting for a more complete unconsciousness and the opportunity to slip away to Falloner's, cast his eyes around the cabin. He noticed now for the first time since his entrance that a crumpled envelope bearing a Western post-mark was lying at the foot of the bed. Daddy knew that the tri-weekly post had arrived an hour before he came, and that Lasham had evidently received a letter. Sure enough the letter itself was lying against the wall beside him. It was open. Daddy felt justified in reading it.

It was curt and business-like, stating that unless Lasham at once sent a remittance for the support of his brother and sister—two children in charge of the writer—they must find a home elsewhere. That the arrears were long standing, and the repeated promises of Lasham to send money had been unfulfilled. That the writer could stand it no longer. This would be his last communication unless the money were sent forthwith.

It was by no means a novel or, under the circumstances, a shocking disclosure to Daddy. He had seen similar missives from daughters, and even wives, consequent on the varying fortunes of his neighbours; no one knew better than he the uncertainties of a miner's prospects, and yet the inevitable hopefulness that buoyed him up. He tossed it aside impatiently, when his eye caught a strip of paper he had overlooked lying upon the blanket near the envelope. It contained a few lines in an unformed, boyish hand addressed to "my bruther," and evidently slipped into the letter after it was written. By the uncertain candle-light Daddy read as follows:—



"DADDY FELT JUSTIFIED IN READING IT."

"Dear Bruther, Rite to me and Cissy rite off. Why aint you done it? It's so long since you rote any. Mister Recketts ses you dont care any more. Wen you rite send your fotograff. Folks here ses I aint got no big bruther any way, as I disrememer his looks, and cant say wots like him. Cissy's kryin' all along of it. I've got a hedake. William Walker made it ake by a blo. So no more at presen from your loving little bruther Jim."

The quick, hysteric laugh with which Daddy read this was quite consistent with his responsive, emotional nature; so too were the ready tears that sprang to his eyes. He put the candle down unsteadily, with a casual glance at the sick man. It was notable, however, that this look contained less sympathy for the ailing "big brother" than his emotion might have suggested. For Daddy was carried quite away by his own mental picture of the helpless children, and eager only to relate his impressions of the incident. He cast another glance at the invalid, thrust the papers into his pocket, and clapping on his hat

slipped from the cabin and ran to the house of festivity. Yet it was characteristic of the man, and so engrossed was he by his one idea, that to the usual inquiries regarding his patient, he answered: "*He's* all right," and plunged at once into the incident of the dunning letter, reserving—with the instinct of an emotional artist—the child's missive until the last. As he expected, the money demand was received with indignant criticisms of the writer.

"That's just like 'em in the States," said Captain Fletcher; "darned if they don't believe we've only got to bore a hole in the ground and snake out a hundred dollars! Why, there's my wife—with a heap of hoss sense in everything else—is allus wonderin' *why* I can't rake in a cool fifty betwixt one steamer day and another."

"That's nothin' to my old dad," interrupted Gus Houston, the "infant" of the camp, a bright-eyed young fellow of twenty; "why, he wrote to me yesterday that if I'd only pick up a single piece of gold every day and just put it aside, sayin' 'that's for popper and mommer,' and not fool it away—it would be all they'd ask of me."

"That's so," added another; "these ignorant relations is just the ruin o' the mining industry. Bob Falloner hez bin lucky in his strike to-day, but he's a darned sight luckier in being without kith or kin that he knows of."

Daddy waited until the momentary irritation had subsided, and then drew the other letter from his pocket. "That ain't all, boys," he began, in a faltering voice, but gradually working himself up to a pitch of pathos; "just as I was thinking all them very things, I kinder noticed this yer poor little bit o' paper lyin' thar lonesome like and forgotten, and I—read it—and well—gentlemen—it just choked me right up!" He stopped, and his voice faltered.

"Go slow, Daddy, go slow!" said an auditor, smilingly. It was evident that Daddy's sympathetic weakness was well known.

Daddy read the child's letter. But, unfortunately, what with his real emotion and the intoxication of an audience, he read it extravagantly, and interpolated a child's lisp (on no authority whatever) and a simulated infantile delivery, which, I fear, at first provoked the smiles rather than the tears of his audience. Nevertheless, at its conclusion the little note was handed round the party, and then there was a moment of thoughtful silence.

"Tell you what it is, boys," said Fletcher, looking around the table; "we ought to be doin' suthin' for them kids right off! Did you," turning to Daddy, "say anythin' about this to Dick?"

"Nary—why, he's clean off his head with fever—don't understand a word—and just babbles," returned Daddy, forgetful of his roseate diagnosis a moment ago, "and hasn't got a cent."

"We must make up what we can amongst us afore the mail goes to-night," said the "infant," feeling hurriedly in his pockets. "Come, ante up, gentlemen," he added, laying the contents of his buckskin purse upon the table.

"Hold on, boys," said a quiet voice. It was their host Falloner who had just risen, and was slipping on his oilskin coat. "You've got enough to do, I reckon, to look after your own folks. I've none! Let this be *my* affair. I've got to go to the Express Office anyhow—to see about my passage home, and I'll just get a draft for a hundred dollars for that old skeesicks—what's his blamed name? Oh, Ricketts," he made a memorandum from the letter, "and I'll send it by express. Meantime, you fellows sit down there and write something—you know what; saying that Dick's hurt his hand and can't write—you know; but asked you to send a draft, which you're doing. *Sabe?* That's all! I'll skip over to the express now and get the draft off, and you can mail the letter an hour later. So put your dust back in your pockets and help yourselves to the whisky while I'm gone." He clapped his hat on his head and disappeared.

"There goes a white man, you bet!" said Fletcher, admiringly, as the door closed behind their host. "Now, boys," he added, drawing a chair to the table, "let's get this yer letter off, and then go back to our game."

Pens and ink were produced, and an animated discussion ensued as to the matter to be conveyed. Daddy's plea for an extended explanatory and sympathetic communication was overruled, and the letter was written to Ricketts, on the simple lines suggested by Falloner.

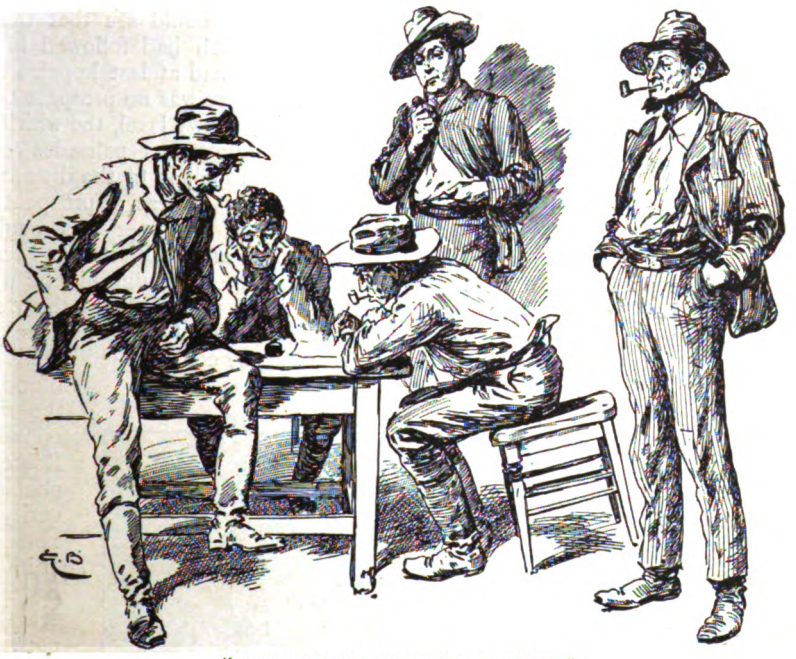
"But what about poor little Jim's letter? *That* ought to be answered," said Daddy, pathetically.

"If Dick hurt his hand so he can't write to Ricketts, how in thunder is he goin' to write to Jim?" was the reply.

"But suthin' oughter be said to the poor kid," urged Daddy, piteously.

"Well, write it yourself—you and Gus Houston make up suthin' together. I'm going to win some money," retorted Fletcher, returning to the card table, where he was presently followed by all but Daddy and Houston.

"Ye can't write it in Dick's name, because



"THE LETTER WAS WRITTEN TO RICKETTS."

that little brother knows Dick's handwriting, even if he don't remember his face. See?" suggested Houston.

"That's so," said Daddy, dubiously; "but," he added, with elastic cheerfulness, "we can write that Dick 'says.' See?"

"Your head's level, old man! Just you wade in on that."

Daddy seized the pen and "waded in." Into somewhat deep and difficult water, I fancy, for some of it splashed into his eyes and he sniffled once or twice as he wrote. "Suthin' like this," he said, after a pause:—

"DEAR LITTLE JIMMIE,—Your big brother havin' hurt his hand, wants me to tell you that otherways he is all hunky and A1. He says he don't forget you and little Cissy, you bet! and he's sendin' money to old Ricketts straight off. He says don't you and Cissy mind whether school keeps or not as long as Big Brother Dick holds the lines. He says he'd have written before, but he's bin follerin' up a lead mighty close, and expects to strike it rich in a few days."

"Oh, come off, Daddy!" interrupted Houston, "that's too thin!"

"You ain't got no *sabe* about kids," said Daddy, imperturbably; "they've got to be humoured like sick folks. And they want everythin' *big*—they don't take no stock in things ez they are, even ef they hev 'em worse than they are. So," continued Daddy, reading, to prevent further interruption, "he says you're just to keep your eyes skinned lookin' out for him comin' home any time—day or night. All you've got to do is to sit up and wait. He might come and even snake you out of your beds! He might come with four white horses and a nigger driver, or he might come disguised as an ornary tramp. Only you've got to be keen on watchin'." ("Ye see," interrupted Daddy, explanatorily, "that'll jest keep them kids lively"); "he says Cissy's to stop cryin' right off, and if Willie Walker hits yer on the right cheek you just slug out with your left fist, 'cordin' to Scripter." "Gosh," ejaculated Daddy, stopping suddenly and gazing anxiously at Houston, "there's that blamed photograph—I clean forgot that."

"And Dick hasn't got one in the shop,

and never had," returned Houston, emphatically. "Golly! that stumps us! Unless," he added, with diabolical thoughtfulness, "we take Bob's? The kids don't remember Dick's face, and Bob's about the same age. And it's a regular star picture—you bet! Bob had it taken in Sacramento—in all his war paint. See!" He indicated a photograph pinned against the wall—a really striking likeness which did full justice to Bob's long silken moustache and large, brown, determined eyes. "I'll snake it off while they ain't lookin', and you jam it in the letter. Bob won't miss it, and we can fix it up with Dick after he's well, and send another."

Daddy silently grasped the Infant's hand, who presently secured the photograph without attracting attention from the card-players. It was promptly inclosed in the letter, addressed to Master James Lasham, the Infant started with it to the post-office, and Daddy Folsom returned to Lasham's cabin to relieve the watcher that had been detached from Falloner's to take his place beside the sick man.

Meanwhile the rain fell steadily and the shadows crept higher and higher up the mountain. Towards midnight the star points faded out one by one over Sawyer's Ledge even as they had come, with the difference that the illumination of Falloner's cabin was extinguished first, while the dim light of Lasham's increased in number. Later, two stars seemed to shoot from the centre of the ledge, trailing along the descent, until they were lost in the obscurity of the slope—the lights of the stage coach to Sacramento carrying the mail and Robert Falloner. They met and passed two fainter lights toiling up the road—the buggy lights of the doctor, hastily summoned from Carterville to the bedside of the dying Dick Lasham.

"THEY PASSED THE BUGGY LIGHTS OF THE DOCTOR."

The slowing up of his train caused Bob Falloner to start from a half doze in a Western Pullman car. As he glanced from his window he could see that the blinding snowstorm which had followed him for the past six hours had at last hopelessly blocked the line. There was no prospect beyond the interminable snowy level, the whirling flakes, and the monotonous palisades of leafless trees seen through it to the distant banks of the Missouri. It was a prospect that the mountain-bred Falloner was beginning to loathe, and, although it was scarcely six weeks since he left California, he was already looking back regretfully to the deep slopes and the free song of the serried ranks of pines.

The intense cold had chilled his temperate blood, even as the rigours and conventions of Eastern life had checked his sincerity and spontaneous flow of animal spirits begotten in the frank intercourse and brotherhood of camps. He had just fled from the artificialities of the great Atlantic cities to seek out some Western farming lands in which he might put his capital and energies. The unlooked-for interruption of his progress by a long-forgotten climate only deepened his discontent. And now—that train was actually backing! It appeared they must return to

the last station to wait for a snow-plough to clear the line. It was, explained the conductor, barely a mile from Shepherdstown, where there was a good hotel and a chance of breaking the journey for the night.

Shepherdstown! The name touched some dim chord in Bob Falloner's memory and conscience—yet one that was vague. Then he suddenly remembered that before leaving New York he had received a letter from Houston informing him of Lasham's death, reminding him of his previous bounty, and begging him—if he went West—to break the news to the Lasham family. There was also some allusion to a joke about his (Bob's) photograph, which he had dismissed as unimportant, and even now could not remember clearly. For a few moments his conscience pricked him that he should have forgotten it all, but now he could make amends by this providential delay. It was not a task to his liking; in any other circumstances he would have written, but he would not shirk it now.

Shepherdstown was on the main line of the Kansas Pacific Road, and as he alighted at its station, the big through trains from San Francisco swept out of the stormy distance and stopped also. He remembered, as he mingled with the passengers, hearing a childish voice ask if this was the Californian train. He remembered hearing the amused and patient reply of the station-master: "Yes, sonny — here she is again, and here's her passengers," as he got into the omnibus and drove to the hotel. Here he resolved to perform his disagreeable duty as quickly as possible, and on his way to his room stopped for a moment at the office to ask for Ricketts's address. The clerk, after a quick glance of curiosity at his new guest, gave it to him readily, with a somewhat familiar smile. It struck Falloner also as being odd that he had not been asked to write his name on the hotel register, but this was a saving of time he was not disposed to question, as he had already determined to make his visit to Ricketts at once, before dinner. It was still early evening.

He was washing his hands in his bedroom when there came a light tap at his sitting-room door. Falloner quickly resumed his coat and entered the sitting-room as the porter ushered in a young lady holding a small boy by the hand. But, to Falloner's utter consternation, no sooner had the door closed on the servant than the boy, with a half apologetic glance at the young lady,

"DICK! DICK!"

uttered a childish cry, broke from her, and calling, "Dick! Dick!" ran forward and leaped into Falloner's arms.

The mere shock of the onset and his own amazement left Bob without breath for words. The boy, with arms convulsively clasping his body, was imprinting kisses on Bob's waist-

coat, in default of reaching his face. At last Falloner managed gently but firmly to free himself, and turned a half-appealing, half-embarrassed look upon the young lady, whose own face, however, suddenly flushed pink. To add to the confusion, the boy, in some reaction of instinct, suddenly ran back to her, frantically clutched at her skirts, and tried to bury his head in their folds.

"He don't love me," he sobbed. "He don't care for me any more."

The face of the young girl changed. It was a pretty face in its flushing; in the paleness and thoughtfulness that overcast it it was a striking face, and Bob's attention was for a moment distracted from the grotesqueness of the situation. Leaning over the boy she said, in a caressing, yet authoritative, voice: "Run away for a moment, dear, until I call you," opening the door for him in a maternal way so inconsistent with the youthfulness of her figure that it struck him even in his confusion. There was something also in her dress and carriage that equally affected him: her garments were somewhat old-fashioned in style, yet of good material, with an odd incongruity to the climate and season.

Under her rough outer cloak she wore a polka jacket and the thinnest of summer blouses; and her hat, though dark, was of rough straw, plainly trimmed. Nevertheless, these peculiarities were carried off with an air of breeding and self-possession that was unmistakable. It was possible that her cool self-possession might have been due to some instinctive antagonism, for as she came a step forward with coldly and clearly-opened grey eyes, he was vaguely conscious that she didn't like him. Nevertheless, her manner was formally polite, even, as he fancied, to the point of irony, as she began, in a voice that occasionally dropped into the lazy Southern intonation, and a speech that easily slipped at times into Southern dialect:—

"I sent the child out of the room as I could see that his advances were annoying to you, and a good deal, I reckon, because I knew your reception of them was still more painful to him. It is quite natural, I dare say, that you should feel as you do, and I reckon consistent with your attitude towards him. But you must make some allowance for the depth of his feelings, and how he has looked forward to this meeting. When I tell you that ever since he received your last letter, he and his sister—until her illness kept her home—had gone every day when the Pacific train was due to the station to meet you; that they have taken literally as Gospel truth every word of your letter——"

"*My* letter?" interrupted Falloner.

The young girl's scarlet lip curled slightly. "I beg your pardon—I should have said the letter you *dictated*. Of course it wasn't in your handwriting—you had hurt your hand, you know," she added, ironically. "At all events, they believed it all—that you were coming at any moment; they lived in that belief, and the poor things went to the station with your photograph in their hands so that they might be the first to recognise and greet you."

"With my photograph?" interrupted Falloner, again.

The young girl's clear eyes darkened ominously. "I reckon," she said, deliberately, as she slowly drew from her pocket the photograph Daddy Folsom had sent, "that that is your photograph. It certainly seems an excellent likeness," she added, regarding him with a slight suggestion of contemptuous triumph.

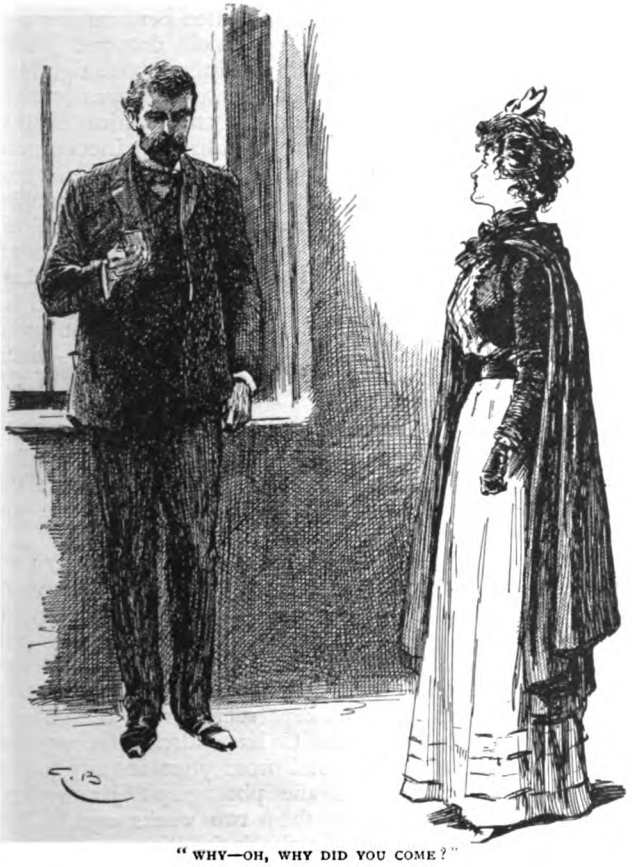
In an instant the revelation of the whole mystery flashed upon him! The forgotten passage in Houston's letter about the stolen photograph stood clearly before him; the coincidence of his appearance in Shepherdstown and the natural mistake of the children and their fair protector were made perfectly plain. But with this relief and the certainty that he could confound her with an explanation came a certain mischievous desire to prolong the situation and increase his triumph. She certainly had not shown him any favour.

"Have you got the letter also?" he asked, quietly.

She whisked it impatiently from her pocket and handed it to him. As he read Daddy's characteristic extravagance and recognised the familiar idiosyncrasies of his old companions he was unable to restrain a smile. He raised his eyes, to meet with surprise the fair stranger's levelled eyebrows and brightly indignant eyes, in which, however, the rain was fast gathering with the lightning.

"It may be amusing to you, and I reckon likely it was all a California joke," she said, with slightly trembling lips; "I don't know No'thern gentlemen and their ways, and you seem to have forgotten our ways as you have your kindred. Perhaps all this may seem so funny to them: it may not seem funny to that boy who is now crying his heart out in the hall; it may not be very amusing to that poor Cissy in her sick bed longing to see her brother. It may be so far from amusing

to her that I should hesitate to bring you there in her excited condition and subject *her* to the pain that you have caused *him*. But I have promised her: she is already expecting us, and the disappointment may be dangerous, and I can only implore you—for a few moments at least—to show a little more affection than you feel." As he made an impulsive, deprecating gesture, yet without changing his look of restrained amusement, she stopped him hopelessly. "Oh, of course, yes, yes, I know it is years since you have seen them; they have no right to expect more; only—only—feeling as you do," she burst out impulsively, "why—oh, *why* did you come?"



"WHY—OH, WHY DID YOU COME?"

Here was Bob's chance. He turned to her politely; began gravely, "I simply came to——" when suddenly his face changed; he stopped as if struck by a blow. His cheek flushed, and then paled! Good God! *What* had he come for? To tell them that this brother they were longing for—living for—perhaps even dying for—was *dead!* In his crass stupidity, his wounded vanity over the scorn of the young girl, his anticipation of triumph, he had forgotten—totally forgotten—what that triumph meant! Perhaps if he had felt more keenly the death of Lasham the thought of it would have been uppermost in his mind; but Lasham was not his partner or associate, only a brother miner, and his single act of generosity was in the ordinary routine of camp life. If she thought him cold and heartless before, what would she think of him now? The absurdity of her mistake had vanished in the grim tragedy he had seemed to have cruelly prepared for her. The thought struck him so keenly that he stammered, faltered, and sank helplessly into a chair.

The shock that he had received was so plain to her that her own indignation went out in the breath of it. Her lip quivered. "Don't you mind," she said, hurriedly, dropping into her Southern speech; "I didn't go to hurt you, but I was just that mad with the thought of those pickaninnies, and the easy way you took it, that I clean forgot I'd no call to catechize you! And you don't know me from the Queen of Sheba. Well," she went on, still more rapidly, and in odd distinction to her previous formal slow Southern delivery, "I'm the daughter of Colonel Boutelle, of Bayou Sara, Louisiana, and his paw, and his paw before him, had a plantation there since the time of Adam, but he lost it and six hundred niggers during the Wah! We were pooh as poohverty—paw and maw and we four girls—and no more idea of work than a baby. But I had an education at the convent at New Orleans, and could play, and speak French, and I got a place as school-teacher here: I reckon the first Southern woman that has taught school in the No'th! Ricketts, who used to be our steward at Bayou Sara, told me about the pickaninnies, and how helpless they were with only a brother who occasionally sent them

money from California. I suppose I cottoned to the pooh little things at first because I knew what it was to be alone amongst strangers, Mr. Lasham; I used to teach them at odd times and look after them, and go with them to the train to look for you. Perhaps Ricketts made me think you didn't care for them; perhaps I was wrong in thinking it was true, from the way you met Jimmy just now. But I've spoken my mind—and you know why." She ceased and walked to the window.

Falloner rose. The storm that had swept through him was over! The quick determination, resolute purpose, and infinite patience which had made him what he was were all there, and with it a conscientiousness which his selfish independence had hitherto kept dormant. He accepted the situation not passively—it was not in his nature—but threw himself into it with all his energy.

"You were quite right," he said, halting a moment beside her; "I don't blame *you*, and let me hope that later you may think me less to blame than you do now. Now, what's to be done? Clearly, I've first to make it right with Tommy—I mean Jimmy—and then we must make a straight dash over to the girl! Whoop!" Before she could understand from his face the strange change in his voice, he had dashed out of the room. In a moment he reappeared with the boy struggling in his arms. "Think of the little scamp not knowing his own brother!" he laughed, giving the boy a really affectionate, if slightly exaggerated, hug, "and expecting me to open my arms to the first little boy who jumps into them! I've a great mind not to give him the present I fetched all the way from California. Wait a moment." He dashed into the bedroom, opened his valise—where he providentially remembered he had kept, with a miner's superstition, the first little nugget of gold he had ever found—seized the tiny bit of quartz and gold, and dashed out again to display it before Jimmy's eager eyes.

If the heartiness, sympathy, and charming kindness of the man's whole manner and face convinced, even while it slightly startled, the young girl, it was still more effective with the boy. Children are quick to detect the false ring of affected emotion, and Bob's was so genuine—whatever its cause—that it might have easily passed for a fraternal expression with harder critics. The child trustfully nestled against him and would have grasped the gold, but the young man whisked it into his pocket. "Not until we've shown it to our little sister—where we're going now! I'm off to order a sleigh." He dashed out again to the office as if he found some relief in action, or as it seemed to Miss Boutelle to avoid embarrassing conversation. When he came back again he was carrying an immense bearskin from his luggage. He cast a critical look at the girl's unseasonable attire.

"I shall wrap you and Jimmy in this—you know it's snowing frightfully!"

Miss Boutelle flushed a little. "I'm warm enough when walking," she said, coldly. Bob glanced at her smart little French shoes, and thought otherwise. He said nothing, but hastily bundled his two guests downstairs and into the street. The whirlwind dance of the snow made the sleigh an indistinct bulk in the gathering darkness, and as the young girl for an instant stood dazedly still, Bob incontinently lifted her from her feet, deposited her in the vehicle, dropped Jimmy in her lap, and wrapped them both tightly in the bearskin. Her weight, which was scarcely more than a child's, struck him in that moment as being tantalizingly incongruous to the matronly severity of her manner and its strange effect upon him. He then jumped in himself, taking the direction from his companion, and drove off through the storm.

The wind and darkness were not favourable to conversation, and only once did he break the silence. "Is there anyone who would be likely to remember—me—where we are going?" he asked, in a lull of the storm.

Miss Boutelle uncovered enough of her face to glance at him curiously. "Hardly! You know the children came here from the No'th after your mother's death, while you were in California."

"Of course," returned Bob, hurriedly; "I was only thinking—you know that some of my old friends might have called," and then collapsed into silence.

After a pause a voice came icily, although under the furs: "Perhaps you'd prefer that your arrival be kept secret from the public? But they seem to have already recognised you at the hotel from your inquiry about Ricketts, and the photograph Jimmy had already shown them two weeks ago." Bob remembered the clerk's familiar manner and the omission to ask him to register. "But it need go no further, if you like," she added, with a slight return of her previous scorn.

"I've no reason for keeping it secret," said Bob, stoutly.

No other words were exchanged until the sleigh drew up before a plain wooden house in the suburbs of the town. Bob could see

at a glance that it represented the income of some careful artisan or small shopkeeper, and that it promised little for an invalid's luxurious comfort. They were ushered into a chilly sitting-room, and Miss Boutelle ran upstairs with Jimmy to prepare the invalid for Bob's appearance. He noticed that a word dropped by the woman who opened the door made the young girl's face grave again, and paled the colour that the storm had buffeted to her cheek. He noticed also that these plain surroundings seemed only to enhance her own superiority, and that the woman treated her with a deference in odd contrast to the ill-concealed disfavour with which she regarded him. Strangely enough, this latter fact was a relief to his conscience. It would have been terrible to have received their kindness under false pretences; to take their just blame of the man he personated seemed to mitigate the deceit.

The young girl rejoined him presently, with troubled eyes. Cissy was worse, and only intermittently conscious, but had asked to see him. It was a short flight of stairs to the bedroom, but before he reached it Bob's heart beat faster than it had in any mountain climb. In one corner of the plainly furnished room stood a small truckle bed, and in it lay the invalid. It needed but a single glance at her flushed face in its aureole of yellow hair to recognise the likeness to Jimmy, although, added to that strange refinement produced by suffering, there was a spiritual exaltation in the child's look—possibly from delirium—that awed and frightened him. An awful feeling that he could not lie to this hopeless creature took possession of him, and his step faltered. But she lifted her small arms pathetically towards him as if she divined his trouble, and he sank on his knees beside her. With a tiny finger curled around his long moustache, she lay there silent. Her face was full of trustfulness, happiness, and consciousness—but she spoke no word.

"SHE SPOKE NO WORD."

There was a pause, and Falloner, slightly lifting his head without disturbing that faintly clasping finger, beckoned Miss Boutelle to his side. "Can you drive?" he said, in a low voice.

"Yes."

"Take my sleigh and get the best doctor in town to come here at once. Bring him with you if you can; if he can't come at once, drive home yourself. I will stay here."

"But——" hesitated Miss Boutelle.

"I will stay here," he repeated.

The door closed on the young girl, and Falloner, still bending over the child, presently heard the sleigh-bells pass away in the storm. He still sat with his bent head held by the tiny clasp of those thin fingers. But the child's eyes were fixed so intently upon him that Mrs. Ricketts leaned over the strangely-assorted pair and said:—

"It's your brother Dick, dearie. Don't you know him?"

The child's lips moved faintly. "Dick's dead," she whispered.

"She's wandering," said Mrs. Ricketts. "Speak to her." But Bob, with his eyes on the child's, lifted a protesting hand. The little sufferer's lips moved again. "It isn't Dick—it's the angel God sent to tell me."

She spoke no more. And when Miss Boutelle returned with the doctor she was beyond the reach of finite voices. Falloner would have remained all night with them, but he could see that his presence in the contracted household was not desired. Even his offer to take Jimmy with him to the hotel was declined, and at midnight he returned alone.

What his thoughts were that night may be easily imagined. Cissy's death had removed the only cause he had for concealing his real identity. There was nothing more to prevent his revealing all to Miss Boutelle and to offer to adopt the boy. But he reflected this could not be done until after the funeral, for it was only due to Cissy's memory that he should still keep up the *rôle* of Dick Lasham as chief mourner. If it seems strange that Bob did not at this crucial moment take Miss Boutelle into his confidence, I fear it was because he dreaded the personal effect of the deceit he had practised upon her more than any ethical consideration; she had softened considerably in her attitude towards him that night; he was human, after all, and while he felt his conduct had been unselfish in the main, he dared not confess to himself how much her opinion had influenced him. He resolved that after the funeral he would continue his journey, and write to her, *en route*, a full explanation of his conduct, inclosing Daddy's letter as corroborative evidence. But on searching his letter-case he found that he had lost even that evidence, and he must trust solely at present to her faith in his improbable story.

It seemed as if his greatest sacrifice was demanded at the funeral! For it could not be disguised that the neighbours were strongly prejudiced against him. Even the preacher improved the occasion to warn the congregation against the dangers of putting off duty until too late. And when Robert Falloner, pale, but self-restrained, left the church with Miss Boutelle, equally pale and reserved, on his arm, he could with difficulty restrain his fury at the passing of a significant smile across the faces of a few curious bystanders. "It was Amy Boutelle that was the 'penitence' that fetched him, you bet!" he overheard, a barely concealed whisper; and the reply, "And it's a good thing she's made out of it, too, for he's mighty rich!"

At the church door he took her cold hand into his. "I am leaving to-morrow morning with Jimmy," he said, with a white face. "Good-bye."

"You are quite right; good-bye," she replied as briefly, but with the faintest colour. He wondered if she had heard it too.

Whether she had heard or not, she went home with Mrs. Ricketts in some righteous indignation, which found—after the young lady's habit—free expression. Whatever were Mr. Lasham's faults of omission it was most un-Christian to allude to them there, and an insult to the poor little dear's memory who had forgiven them. Were she in his shoes she would shake the dust of the town off her feet; and she hoped he would. She was a little softened on arriving to find Jimmy in tears. He had lost brother Dick's photograph—or Dick had forgotten to give it back at the hotel, for this was all he had in his pocket. And he produced a letter—the missing letter of Daddy, which by mistake Falloner had handed back instead of the photograph! Miss Boutelle saw the superscription and Californian post-mark with a vague curiosity.

"Did you look inside, dear? Perhaps it slipped in."

Jimmy had not. Miss Boutelle did—and I grieve to say, ended by reading the whole letter.

Bob Falloner had finished packing his things the next morning, and was waiting for Mr. Ricketts and Jimmy. But when a tap

came at the door, he opened it to find Miss Boutelle standing there. "I have sent Jimmy into the bedroom," she said, with a faint smile, "to look for the photograph which you gave him this in mistake for. I think for the present he prefers his *brother's picture* to this letter, which I have not explained to him or anyone." She stopped, and raising her eyes to his said, gently: "I think it would have only been a part of your goodness to have trusted *me*, Mr. Falloner."

"Then you will forgive me?" he said, eagerly.

She looked at him frankly, yet with a faint trace of coquetry that the angels might have pardoned. "Do you want me to say to you what Mrs. Ricketts says were the last words of poor Cissy?"

A year later, when the darkness and rain were creeping up Sawyer's Ledge, and Houston and Daddy Folsom were sitting before their brush-wood fire in the old Lasham cabin, the latter delivered himself oracularly:—

"It's a mighty queer thing, that news about Bob! It's not that he's married, for that might happen to anyone; but this yer account in the paper of his wedding being attended by his 'little brother.' That gets me! To think all the while he was here he was lettin' on to us that he hadn't kith or kin! Well, sir, that accounts to me for one thing—the sing'ler way he tumbled to that letter of poor Dick Lasham's little brother and sent him that draft! Don't ye see? It was a feller feelin'! Knew how it was himself! I reckon ye all thought I was kinder soft reading that letter o' Dick Lasham's little brother to him, but ye see what it did."

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

LVI.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THE TWELVE O'CLOCK RULE.

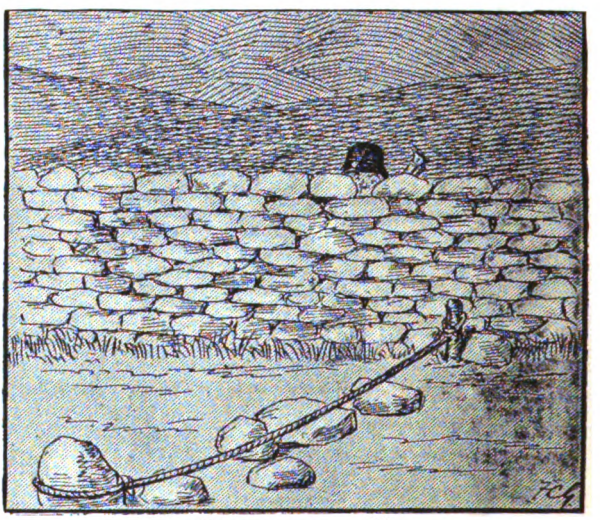
GENTLEMEN of England who sit at ease on the benches of the House of Commons with public business commencing at half-past three and, save on special occasions, shutting up with a snap at midnight, can hardly realize the life of a member before the blessed era of the twelve o'clock rule. In these days, when Ministers under pressure of accumulated work and diminishing time move to suspend the twelve o'clock rule, they are met with loud protests and a division. So rooted is the distaste of modern M.P.'s to sit up after midnight that it frequently happens the abnormal extension of the sitting does not exceed the time occupied by protest against it. That is to say, if members had not insisted on taking a division on the proposal they might, the appointed work completed, have got home at twelve o'clock just as usual. The twelve o'clock rule, like the closure, was avowedly introduced as an experiment. It would be a bold, indeed a doomed, Minister who would propose to abolish either.

VOTING SUPPLY.

Whilst the labour of legislators is lightened by the forms forced upon the House by the disguised blessing of Irish obstruction, the amount of work accomplished is at least equal to that achieved in any average Session under the old *régime*. At the same time, the conditions under which work is accomplished are more favourable to its fashioning. Under the old style, measures brought in by the Government of the day were met by the tactics of the Obstructionist, master of the situation against whatever preponderance of reasoned opinion. The only way to overcome him was by the fuller opportunity of sheer physical endurance provided by the system of relays. When the Obstructionist was worn out, usually at some early hour of the morning, a particular amendment or clause of a Bill passed. In many cases it had not been discussed, members having something useful to say being elbowed aside by the Obstructionists.

Mr. Arthur Balfour is, with lessening vehemence, accused of burking debate because he strictly limits to something over a score the number of nights allotted to discussion in Committee of Supply. Everyone who pays close attention to the business of the House knows that since that rule was established, with its condition of giving one night a week to Committee from the beginning of the Session, Supply is more fully and intelligently discussed than at any earlier period within the memory of the oldest member.

It is true that if at a specified date in August particular Votes have not been passed they are carried without debate by the automatic pressure of the closure. That is very sad. But exactly the same thing came to pass under the clumsier machinery of elder days. What happened then was prolongation of the Session, a House kept by a few score of fagged members, a series of late sittings, and the Votes carried in their integrity after a prolonged squabble.



"IRISH OBSTRUCTION!"

THE LENGTH OF SITTINGS.

It must not be forgotten in considering labour conditions in the House of Commons that, though the House usually adjourns at midnight, it, contrary to Charles Lamb's principle, makes up for it by meeting an hour earlier. Before the twelve o'clock rule

FAGGED.

was established the Speaker took the Chair at four o'clock in the afternoon. Now he is seated at three. One of the most laborious Sessions of modern times was that of 1881, when Mr. Gladstone, full of great schemes of legislative reform, was met by Irish obstruction, then in its palmiest days. Looking back I find that the average length of the daily sittings in that Session was nine hours and five minutes. Of these, not less than 238 hours and 35 minutes were, in the course of the Session, spent after midnight. I have not at hand information about the average length of the daily sittings last Session. But I should be surprised if they fell far short of the terrible times of nineteen years ago, with the important difference that work was wound up before midnight.

Previous to the Session of 1881, the House sat longest and latest in the quinquennial period, 1831 to 1836. That was the Reform epoch, when Sir Charles Wetherell, father and founder of Parliamentary obstruction as fifty years later practised by Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar, was to the fore. The House sat daily on the average for eight hours and forty minutes. After the spurt round the Reform Bill, exhausted nature sought repose, and for the next quinquennial period the average of sittings ran down to six hours and thirty-two minutes. It jumped up again in Corn Law time to a daily average exceeding eight hours, a state of things not paralleled till, after the General Election of 1868, Mr. Gladstone came in with a run. From 1872 to 1876 the average daily sitting was extended to eight hours and four minutes. The time went on increasing till, as we have seen, in 1881 the sittings through 154 days, an exceptionally long Session, exceeded an average of nine hours.

THE HOUR OF MEETING.

What is the best hour for the daily meeting for business has always been a troubled question for the House of Commons. In 1833, the sitting hitherto commencing at four o'clock, a curious and long-forgotten expedient was tried. It was ordered that the House should meet at noon, adjourn at three o'clock, resume its sittings at five, and sit the agenda out. It would seem that human ingenuity could not hit upon a more inconvenient hour. It is true the dinner-hour was much earlier then. But dinner would not be ready in ordinary households between three and five in the afternoon. The arrangement lasted only for two Sessions, the House in 1835 going back to the four o'clock arrangement.

Disraeli did not enter the House till this experiment had been dead for two Sessions. It must have been familiar to him, and was probably the germ of the scheme of morning Sessions invented by him and established in 1867. Here the hours were more sanely selected, the House now, as then, meeting at two o'clock on Tuesdays and Fridays when morning sittings are appointed, the sitting being suspended between seven o'clock and nine. The Wednesday sitting does not date farther back than 1845. Up to that date the sittings on Wednesdays were fixed for the evening, like other days. In that year it was ordered that the House should, on Wednesdays, meet at noon, rising at six.

MR. GLADSTONE'S ORATORICAL GESTURES.

The familiar story of the barrister who acquired a habit of fingering a particular button when he was pleading, and who lost the thread of his discourse when the button was secretly and maliciously cut off, finds no parallel in the House of Commons. But whilst in no case is mannerism of the kind marked to exaggerated extent, several frequent participants in debate have certain tricks of action more or less indispensable to successful speech. Mr. Gladstone's gestures, like his other resources, were infinite. At one time —it was during the fever heat of the turbulent Parliament of 1880–5—he fell into a habit of emphasizing his points either by beating his clenched fist into the open palm of

his left hand, or violently thumping the harmless box with open right hand. This last trick was recurrence to an earlier manner observation of which drew from Disraeli an expression of heartfelt thanksgiving that so substantial a piece of furniture as the table of the House of Commons separated him from the right hon. gentleman.

In its fuller development the exercise became so violent it occasionally happened that the very point he desired especially to force on the attention of his audience was lost in the clamour of collision. Mr. Gladstone was, of course, unconscious of this habit, as he was of another trick, manœuvred by stretching his right arm to its full length, rigidly extending his fingers and lightly scratching the top of his head with his thumb-nail.

The Premier's colleagues on the Treasury Bench were so perturbed by the fisticuffing, which frequently gave cause to the enemy to guffaw, that they proposed among themselves that one of them should delicately call his attention to the matter. The proposal was pleasing, but who was to bell the cat? After fruitless discussion of this question in the inner camp, the Dean of Windsor, an old personal friend of Mr. Gladstone's, was meanly approached and induced to undertake the task. I don't know how the mission fared. Its curative effects were certainly not permanent.

AUTOMATIC GESTURES.—I. SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT.

SOME OTHERS.

Sir William Harcourt, while addressing the House of Commons, has a persuasive habit of lightly swinging his eyeglasses suspended from his outstretched forefinger. He also, when occasion arises, thumps the box with mailed fist. When he fires a heavy shot into the opposite camp he revolves swiftly on his heel, looking to right and left of the benches behind him in jubilant response to the cheers that applaud his success. Mr. Arthur Balfour, whose always growing perfection of Parliamentary debate sloughs off tricks of manner, is still sometimes seen holding on to himself with both hands by the lapels of his coat, apparently afraid that otherwise he might run away before his speech was ended. A similar fancy is suggested by Mr. Goschen's trick of feeling himself over, especially in the neighbourhood of the ribs. Finding he is all right (on the spot, so to speak), he proceeds to wash his hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water.

Even more apologetic in manner when delivering an excellent speech is Mr. Lecky. If he had chanced to be born, like another Irish member long since departed, without arms or legs, he would be a much more effective debater. As it is there are arms and legs, even of exceptional length, and Mr. Lecky, whilst discoursing on high themes of politics, painfully conscious of their presence, mutely apologizes for their intrusion.

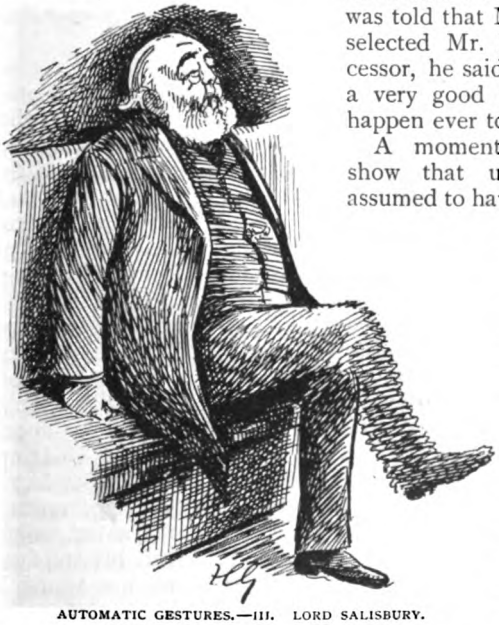
Lord George Hamilton explaining away Chitral campaigns, or other awkward things, with swift action and painful precision rearranges the pages of his MS. notes. Using both hands to move a sheet off the box on to the table, he straightway, with equally anxious care, returns it. Sheets of paper have an irresistible fascination for the Secretary of State for India. Seated on Treasury Bench following the debate, he occupies himself hour after hour in folding sheets of paper into strips, re-folding them lengthwise, and tearing them up in square inches. If his life, or even his office, depended on the mathematical accuracy of the square, he could not devote more time to its achievement.

Sir John Gorst, leaning an elbow on the

box, turns his head slowly to the left, then to the right, as if he were expecting the entrance upon the scene of the corporate body of that mystic entity the Committee of Council. Lord Rosebery is a more marked offender than Sir John in the matter of the almost fatally ineffective habit of leaning an elbow on the table whilst addressing the House. In the Lords the effect is more disastrous, since neither Ministers nor ex-Ministers have anything corresponding to the historic boxes on the table of the House of Commons. Sir John Gorst, falling into this attitude, has not to stoop lower than the height of the box. Lord Rosebery, lounging at the table of the House of Lords, is fain considerably to stoop, an attitude not attractive in itself or conducive to effective speaking. But then Lord Rosebery's speech, whether in the House of Lords or elsewhere, is so precious and so welcome it does not matter how he chooses to stand in the act of delivery.

AUTOMATIC GESTURES.—II. SIR JOHN GORST.

Lord Salisbury has no gestures when he gets up to speak, but he makes up for the deficiency before he rises. It is easy to know when he intends to take part in a current debate. If he does, his right leg, crossed over his left knee, will be observed jogging at a pace equivalent to ten miles an hour on a level track. The working of this curious piece of machinery seems indispensable to the framing of the exquisitely pungent, perfectly-phrased sentences presently to be spoken without the assistance of written notes.



AUTOMATIC GESTURES.—III. LORD SALISBURY.

THE MYSTERY OF MR. WHALLEY.

Of all the tricks attendant upon speech in Parliament, the late Mr. Whalley, long time member for Peterborough, practised the strangest and the most inexplicable. Whenever he rose to speak, and he was frequently on his legs when the Jesuits or the non-believers in the Tichborne Claimant were to the fore, he thrice tapped with the knuckles of his right hand the bench before him. What this might portend, whether it was in the nature of an incantation or invocation, I cannot say. I can only testify that, during the Parliament that met in 1874 and was dissolved in 1880, Mr. Whalley sat on the second bench behind the Opposition Leader immediately under my box in the Press Gallery. I closely watched for the uncanny movement, and never once saw him rise without the preliminary of this weird signal.

"DON'T HAPPEN TO KNOW HIM."

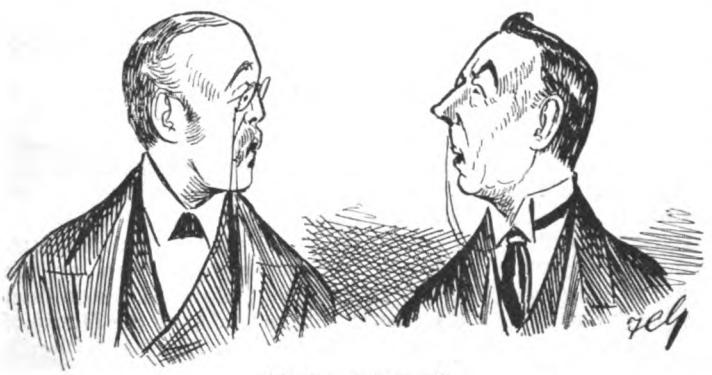
Sir Algernon West in his Recollections says, "When on the retirement of Mr. Denison from the Speakership of the House of Commons in 1872, Mr. Disraeli was told that Mr. Gladstone had selected Mr. Brand as his successor, he said, 'I daresay he is a very good man, but I don't happen ever to have seen him.'"

A moment's reflection will show that unless Disraeli is assumed to have told a deliberate and purposeless falsehood, this rumour cannot be true. At the time of his election to the Chair, Mr. Brand had held a seat in the House of Commons for twenty years. For nine years, from 1859 to 1868, he was chief Whip of the Liberal Party. Concurrently Mr. Disraeli was in succession Chancellor of the Exchequer, Prime Minister, and Leader of the House. To suppose the Leader of the House of Commons "didn't happen ever to have seen" the Opposition Whip, one of whose duties is to march up to the Table with the

other tellers on big party divisions, is too great a strain on credulity.

A DARK HORSE.

It is, however, true that when the present Speaker's name came to the front, as the Government nominee for the Chair vacated by Mr. Peel, there were many members who would have been nonplussed if they had been called upon to pick him out. I remember, shortly after his election, Mr. Arthur Balfour telling me that, at dinner on the evening of the day authoritative notice was published of intention to nominate Mr.



"DO YOU KNOW HIM?"
"NO—DO YOU?"

Gully for the Chair, Mr. Chamberlain asked him what sort of a man the candidate was. Mr. Balfour was obliged to admit that as far as he knew he had never set eyes upon him, Mr. Chamberlain confessing to a similar state of ignorance.

AN UNDELIVERED SPEECH.

During the storm and stress of obstruction in Parnell's palmy days a strange accident befell one of his faithful followers. He had devoted much time and the appliance of native genius to the preparation of a speech in a current debate. In order that the area of humanity benefiting might be as large as possible, he arranged with the editor of the newspaper circulating among his constituency in the West of Ireland for a verbatim report. This was made possible by the simple and inexpensive means of furnishing the paper in advance with a copy of his speech. By way of precaution against misadventure, it was arranged that unless a telegram reached the office by midnight announcing postponement the report should be inserted in the morning's issue.

It happened that out of embarrassment of riches in the way of obstruction the Irish members on this night broke out in a fresh place. Moving the adjournment they upset the ordered arrangement of business, occupying the evening with the newly launched wrangle. Meanwhile their colleague, with the MS. of his oration in his breast-pocket, and painfully conscious of another copy in type in the newspaper office, sat upon thorns. At any moment the irregular debate on the adjournment might close, the Order of the Day might be called on, and with it would come opportunity of delivering his speech.

Just after eleven o'clock this turn of events seemed close at hand. But the conversation dragged on, and at half-past eleven the worn-out watcher, giving up in despair, telegraphed to hold back the report. Unfortunately it was a stormy night outside as well as inside the House of Commons. The message was not delivered till the paper had gone to press with a full report of "our hon. member's speech in the House of Commons last night," supplemented by some editorial reflections on the influence it was likely to have on the course of public affairs and the conscience of the Chief Secretary.

That was bad enough. Worse still was the circumstance that the sub-editor, reading the proof, had plentifully interpolated "cheers," "laughter," "loud laughter," cries of "Oh! oh!" these last from the Ministerialists writhing under the lash of our hon. member's oratory.

THACKERAY'S FIRST "POME."

There is nothing new under the sun. A similar accident befell another and a greater Irishman. It was otherwise notable for the fact that it led to Thackeray's first appearance in print. It befell when he was a lad, some fifteen years old, staying with his stepfather, Major Smyth, who, turning his sword into a ploughshare, settled down as a gentleman farmer in Devonshire. Ottery St. Mary is the name of the district in the matter-of-fact "Postal Guide." Later, in a work of even greater circulation, it became famous as Clavering St. Mary, "the little old town" in which Pendennis was born.

It happened that Lalor Sheil, the Irish

orator, proposed to advocate the policy of emancipation at a mass meeting on Peneden Heath, in Kent. When he presented himself to deliver his discourse there burst forth an outcry that prevented a sentence being heard beyond the limits of the cart on which he stood. Happily he had observed the precaution before leaving town of sending to the morning papers a copy of his projected speech. Accordingly, though unspoken at Peneden, it appeared in the morning newspapers in verbatim form.

Boy Thackeray thus described the incident:—

He strove to speak, but the men of Kent
Began a grievous shouting;
When out of the waggon the little man went
And put a stop to his spouting.

"What though these heretics heard me not,"
Quoth he to his friend Canonical,
"My speech is safe in the *Times*, I wot,
And eke in the *Morning Chronicle*."

A NOTE OF HEREDITY.

At best, Lalor Sheil was not equipped by Nature for the difficult task of addressing a mass meeting out of doors. Mr. Gladstone, who heard many of his speeches, and had a profound admiration for his eloquence, described his voice as "resembling the sound of a tin kettle beaten about from place to place."

There is a curious note of heredity in the fact that his kinsman and successor in the House of Commons, Mr. Edward Sheil, was equally weak in the matter of voice. Once he managed to deliver a long speech without sound of voice.

He acted as Whip to the party, a post for which he had the prime qualification of being popular on both sides of the House. As Whip, he was not expected to contribute to the campaign of speech-making carried on by his colleagues with a view to obstructing public business. As a rule he availed himself of his privilege, remaining a silent spectator of the fun.

One night, after prolonged sitting, when the ordinary contributors to speech-making from the Irish side were worn out, Mr. Sheil gallantly undertook to hold the field whilst his comrades had a brief rest. He rose from the third bench below the gangway on the Opposition side. The Speaker had called him; he was in possession of the House, and members turned with languid interest to hear what he might have to say.

A dead silence fell over the Chamber. Members looking more closely to see why Mr. Sheil had not commenced his speech observed that his lips were moving. Also, from time to time, he with outstretched arm enforced by gesture a point he thought he had made. But not a whisper escaped his lips. After a while members beginning to enter into the fun of the thing cried, "Hear! hear!" Thus encouraged, Mr. Sheil's oratorical action became more forcible and frequent, but never a sound from his lips was heard. The scene went on for fully a quarter of an hour, amid rapturous cheering from the delighted House, Mr. Sheil resuming his seat with the air of a man who felt he had spoken to the point.

A PRIVATE NOTE ON WALMER CASTLE.

Among Lord Granville's papers (when are we to have his memoirs?) will be found a letter written to him by the late Lord Stanhope, dated from "Chevening, October, 1866." Lord Granville had recently come into the office, more prized than the Foreign Seals, of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. The late Lord Stanhope was born almost within the precincts of Walmer Castle, Mr. Pitt, then Lord Warden, having on their marriage lent his father and mother the cottage which stands close to the entrance of the Castle grounds from the village side. As one familiar with Walmer Castle in the time of Pitt and the Duke of Wellington, Lord Granville asked Earl Stanhope to give him a few notes on the subject, a task cheerfully undertaken by the historian and genially accomplished.

PITT'S ROOM.

One of the distinctions of Walmer Castle is that on a treeless coast its grounds are umbrageous. It was Pitt who planted the trees, though he did not live long enough to sit under their shade. Pitt, with all the Castle wherein to choose, selected a curious room as his own. He might have had one facing either the sea or the south. His room to this day looks into the moat, and is faced by the dead wall that guards it. For more than thirty years the room was left exactly as it was when Pitt lay down in it for the last time. The Queen and Prince Consort spent a portion of their honeymoon at Walmer Castle. In anticipation of the event a new dining-room was contrived by knocking down the wall of Pitt's room and joining it to the next one. When the young couple left the wall was re-built, and to-day Pitt's room is—or was in Lord Dufferin's day when I was a guest at the Castle—the *habitat* of the housekeeper.

Long before her time the room had quite another occupant. Lord Stanhope, in the letter quoted from, says, "Wellington told

TALLEYRAND SLEEPING IN PITT'S BED.

me that when he received a visit from Prince Talleyrand at Walmer Castle, Talleyrand asked particularly to occupy Mr. Pitt's room, and seemed to live there in some sense of triumph. His idea was that he had been treated rather slightingly by Mr. Pitt when he came over as secretary to M. Chacevelin in 1792, and that to sleep in his rival's bed was like taking a *revanche*."

That is, perhaps, rather a fanciful conclusion. In the circumstances Pitt's profounder sleep was not likely to be disturbed by reflections on the fact that Talleyrand was tucking himself up in his old bed at Walmer Castle.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S ROOM.

The room in which the Duke of Wellington slept and died has not since been occupied by any lesser mortal. Thanks to the loyalty and liberality of Mr. W. H. Smith, the room has been reinstated in something like the condition in which the Duke left it. In matter of proportions and outlook it is not much better than Pitt's. It is furnished with the stern simplicity of a camp.

When Mr. W. H. Smith was nominated to the Lord Wardenship in succession to Pitt, Wellington, Palmerston, and Lord Granville, he found that the fixings of Walmer Castle, memorials of the daily life of the mighty dead, did not pertain to the Castle. They were "taken over," like ordinary fixtures, by successive tenants, upon payment of their valuation.

Lord Palmerston, when he became Lord Warden, did not want the Duke of Wellington's boots or his bedstead. Nor was he disposed to fork out £5 for the quaint-looking chair in which Pitt often sat meditating on Napoleon's triumphal march through Europe. The priceless relics were accordingly distributed.

Happily the present Duke of Wellington obtained all pertaining to his father, and liberally joined Mr. W. H. Smith in reinstating them. Things seem a little out of joint when we reflect that the dispersal of these historic relics took place under the *régime* of the blue-blooded aristocrat Viscount Palmerston, and that their restoration was painstakingly accomplished by a tradesman from the Strand, W.C.

"NAME! NAME!"

In the smoking-room of the House of Commons there is a simple device whereby is spelled out the names of members as they successively address the House. Just as in travelling on the District Railway the name of the approaching station is displayed and stands in view till the point is passed, so whilst a member is on his legs in the House of Commons his name is shining over the fireplace of the smoking-room as if he were Bovril or Vinolia soap.

This arrangement is so convenient that it might well be extended. It would be of especial use in the Central Lobby, where members drop out for a chat whilst Mr. Caldwell or Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett is on his legs. That is all very well, but it may happen that either of these gentlemen is succeeded by a member whose speech one would not like to miss. The danger would be averted if at some convenient point in the Lobby the names of speakers were set forth as they are in the smoking-room.

A DEFINITION.

I have been much struck by an observation, contributed by a well-known Irishman, to a conversation upon the qualifications necessary for an Irish member.

"There are," said he, "three classes of people from whom the Irish member may be best recruited—millionaires, who can afford it; paupers, who have nothing to lose; and fools of all descriptions."

An Englishman mustn't say things of that kind. An Irishman may, and does.

The Brass Bottle.

By F. Anstey.

Author of "Vice-Versâ," etc., etc.

CHAPTER VII.

"GRATITUDE—A LIVELY SENSE OF FAVOURS TO COME."

MOST men on suddenly finding themselves in possession of such enormous wealth would have felt some elation. Ventimore, as we have seen, was merely exasperated. And, although this attitude of his may strike the reader as incomprehensible or absolutely wrong-headed, he had more reason on his side than might appear at a first view.

It was undoubtedly the fact that, with the money these treasures represented, he would be in a position to convulse the money markets of Europe and America, bring society to his feet, make and unmake kingdoms—dominate, in short, the entire world.

"But, then," as Horace told himself with a groan, "it wouldn't amuse me in the least to convulse money markets. Do I want to see the smartest people in London grovelling for anything they think they're likely to get out of me? As I should be perfectly well aware that their homage was not paid to any personal merit of mine, I could hardly consider it flattering. And why should I make kingdoms? The only thing I understand and care about is making houses. Then, am I likely to be a better hand at dominating the world than all the others who have tried the experiment? I doubt it."

He called to mind all the millionaires he had ever read or heard of; they didn't seem to get much fun out of their riches. The majority of them were martyrs to dyspepsia. They were often weighed down by the cares and responsibilities of their position; the only people who were unable to obtain an audience of them at any time were their friends; they lived in a glare of publicity, and every post brought them hundreds of begging letters, and a few threats; their children were in constant danger from kidnappers, and they themselves, after knowing no rest in life, could not be certain that even their tombs would be undisturbed. Whether they were extravagant or thrifty, they were equally maligned, and, whatever the fortune they left behind them, they could be absolutely certain that, in a couple of generations, it would be entirely dissipated.

"And the biggest millionaire living," concluded Horace, "is a pauper compared with me!"

But there was another consideration—how was he to realize all this wealth? He knew enough about precious stones to be aware that a ruby, for instance, of the true "pigeon's blood" colour and the size of a melon, as all these rubies were, would be worth, even when cut, considerably over a million; but who would buy it?

"I think I see myself," he reflected, grimly, "calling on some diamond merchant in Hatton Garden with half-a-dozen assorted jewels in a Gladstone bag. If he believed they were genuine, he'd probably have a fit; but most likely he'd think I'd invented some dodge for manufacturing them, and had been fool enough to overdo the size. Anyhow, he'd want to know how they came into my possession, and what could I say? That they were part of a little present made to me by a Jinnee in grateful acknowledgment of my having relieved him from a brass bottle in which he'd been shut up for nearly three thousand years! Look at it how you will, it's *not* convincing. I fancy I can guess what he'd say. And what an ass I should look! Then suppose the thing got into the papers?"

Got into the papers? Why, of course it would get into the papers. As if it were possible in these days for a young and hitherto unemployed architect suddenly to surround himself with wondrous carpets, and gold vessels, and gigantic jewels, without attracting the notice of some enterprising journalist. He would be interviewed; the story of his curiously acquired riches would go the round of the papers; he would find himself the object of incredulity, suspicion, ridicule. In imagination he could already see the head-lines on the news-sheets:—

BOTTLED BILLIONS.
AMAZING ARABESQUES BY AN ARCHITECT.
HE SAYS THE JAR CONTAINED A JINNEE.
SENSATIONAL STORY.
DIVERTING DETAILS.

And so on, through every phrase of alliterative ingenuity. He ground his teeth at the mere thought of it. Then Sylvia would come to hear of it, and what would *she* think? She would naturally be repelled, as any nice-minded girl would be, by the idea that her lover was in secret alliance with a super-

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natural being And her father and mother—would they allow her to marry a man, however rich, whose wealth came from such a questionable source? No one would believe that he had not made some unholy bargain before consenting to set this incarcerated spirit free—he, who had acted in absolute ignorance, who had persistently declined all reward after realizing what he had done!

No, it was too much. Try as he might to do justice to the Jinnee's gratitude and generosity, he could not restrain a bitter resentment at the utter want of consideration shown in overloading him with gifts so useless and so compromising. No Jinnee—however old, however unfamiliar with the world as it is now—had any right to be such a fool!

And at this, above the ramparts of sacks and bales, which occupied all the available space in the room, appeared Mrs. Rapkin's face.

"I was going to ask you, sir, before them parcels came," she began, with a dry cough of disapproval, "what you would like in the way of ongtray to-morrow night. I thought if I could find a sweetbread at all reasonable——"

To Horace—surrounded as he was by incalculable riches — sweetbreads seemed incongruous just then; the transition of thought was too violent.

"I can't bother about that now, Mrs. Rapkin," he said; "we'll settle it to-morrow. I'm too busy."

"I suppose most of these things will have to go back, sir, if they're only sent on approval like?"

If he only knew where and how he could send them back! "I—I'm not sure," he said; "I may have to keep them."

"Well, sir, bargain or none, I wouldn't have 'em as a gift myself, being so dirty and fusty; they can't be no use to nobody, not to mention there being no room to move with them blocking up all the place. I'd better tell Rapkin to carry 'em all upstairs out of people's way."

"ABOVE THE RAMPARTS OF SACKS AND BALES APPEARED MRS. RAPKIN'S FACE."

"Certainly not," said Horace, sharply, by no means anxious for the Rapkins to discover the real nature of his treasures. "Don't touch them, either of you. Leave them exactly as they are, do you understand?"

"As you please, Mr. Ventimore, sir, only, if they're not to be interfered with, I don't see myself how you're going to set your friends down to dinner to-morrow, that's all."

And, indeed, considering that the table and every available chair, and even the floor were heaped so high with valuables that Horace himself could only just squeeze his way between the piles, it *did* seem as if his guests might find themselves inconveniently cramped.

"It will be all right," he said, with an optimism he was very far from feeling; "we'll manage somehow—leave it to me."

Before he left for his office he took the precaution to baffle any inquisitiveness on the part of his landlady by locking his sitting-room door and carrying away the key, but it

was in a very different mood from his former light-hearted confidence that he sat down to his drawing-board in Great Cloister Street that morning. He could not concentrate his mind; his enthusiasm and his ideas had alike deserted him.

He flung down the dividers he had been using and pushed away the nest of saucers of Indian ink and colours in a fit of petulance. "It's no good," he exclaimed, aloud; "I feel a perfect duffer this morning. I couldn't even design a decent dog-kennel!"

Even as he spoke he became conscious of a presence in the room, and, looking round, saw Fakrash the Jinnee standing at his elbow, smiling down on him more benevolently than ever, and with a serene expectation of being warmly welcomed and thanked, which made Horace rather ashamed of his own inability to meet it.

"He's a thoroughly good-natured old chap," he thought, self-reproachfully. "He means well, and I'm a beast not to feel more glad to see him. And yet, hang it all! I can't have him popping in and out of the office like a rabbit whenever the fancy takes him!"

"Peace be upon thee," said Fakrash. "Moderate the trouble of thy heart, and impart thy difficulties to me."

"Oh, they're nothing, thanks," said Horace, feeling decidedly embarrassed. "I got stuck over my work for the moment, and it worried me a little—that's all."

"Then thou hast not yet received the gifts which I commanded should be delivered at thy dwelling-place?"

"Oh, indeed I have!" replied Horace; "and—and I really don't know how to thank you for them."

"A few trifling presents," answered the Jinnee, "and by no means suited to thy dignity—yet the best in my power to bestow upon thee for the time being."

"My dear sir, they simply overwhelm me with their magnificence! They're beyond all price, and—and I've no idea what to do with such a superabundance."

"A superfluity of good things is good," was the Jinnee's sententious reply.

"Not in my particular case. I—I quite feel your goodness and generosity; but, indeed, as I told you before, it's really impossible for me to accept any such reward."

Fakrash's brows contracted slightly. "How sayest thou that it is impossible—seeing that these things are already in thy possession?"

"I know," said Horace; "but—you won't be offended if I speak quite plainly?"

"Art thou not even as a son to me, and can I be angered at any words of thine?"

"Well," said Horace, with sudden hope, "honestly, then, I would very much rather—if you're sure you don't mind—that you would take them all back again."

"What? Dost thou demand that I, Fakrash-el-Aamash, should consent to receive back the gifts I have bestowed? Are they then of so little value in thy sight?"

"They're of too much value. If I took such a reward for—for a very ordinary service, I should never be able to respect myself again."

"This is not the reasoning of an intelligent person," said the Jinnee, coldly.

"If you think me a fool, I can't help it. I'm not an ungrateful fool, at all events. But I feel very strongly that I can't keep these gifts of yours."

"So thou wouldst have me break the oath which I swore to reward thee fitly for thy kind action?"

"But you *have* rewarded me already," said Horace, "by contriving that a wealthy merchant should engage me to build him a residence. And—forgive my plain speaking—if you truly desire my happiness (as I am sure you do) you will relieve me of all these precious gems and merchandise, because, to be frank, they will *not* make me happy. On the contrary, they are making me extremely uncomfortable."

"In the days of old," said Fakrash, "all men pursued wealth; nor could any amass enough to satisfy his desires. Have riches, then, become so contemptible in mortal eyes that thou findest them but an encumbrance? Explain the matter."

Horace felt a natural delicacy in giving his real reasons. "I can't answer for other men," he said. "All I know is that I've never been accustomed to being rich, and I'd rather get used to it gradually, and be able to feel that I owed it, as far as possible, to my own exertions. For, as I needn't tell *you*, Mr. Fakrash, riches alone don't make any fellow happy. You must have observed that they're apt to—well, to land him in all kinds of messes and worries. . . . I'm talking like a confounded copybook," he thought, "but I don't care how priggish I am if I can only get my way!"

Fakrash was deeply impressed. "Oh, young man of marvellous moderation!" he cried. "Thy sentiments are not inferior to those of the Great Suleyman himself (on

whom be peace!). Yet even he doth not utterly despise them, for he hath gold and ivory and precious stones in abundance. Nor hitherto have I ever met a human being capable of rejecting them when offered. But, since thou seemest sincere in holding that my poor and paltry gifts will not advance thy welfare, and since I would do thee good and not evil—be it even as thou wouldst. For excellently was it said: 'The worth of a present depends not on itself, nor on the giver, but on the receiver alone.'"

Horace could hardly believe that he had really prevailed. "It's extremely good of you, sir," he said, "to take it so well. And if you *could* let that caravan call for them as soon as possible, it would be a great convenience to me. I mean—er—the fact is, I'm expecting a few friends to dine with me to-morrow, and, as my rooms are rather small at the best of times, I don't quite know how I can manage to entertain them at all unless something is done."

"It will be the easiest of actions," replied Fakrash; "therefore, have no fear that, when the time cometh, thou wilt not be able to entertain thy friends in a fitting manner. And for the caravan, it shall set out without delay."

"By Jove, though, I'd forgotten one thing," said Horace: "I've locked up the room where your presents are—they won't be able to get in without the key."

"Against the servants of the Jinn neither bolts nor bars can prevail. They shall enter therein and remove all that they brought thee, since it is thy desire."

"Very many thanks," said Horace. "And you do *really* understand that I'm every bit as grateful as if I could keep the things? You see, I want all my time and all my energies to complete the designs for this building, which," he added, gracefully, "I should never be in a position to do at all, but for your assistance."

"On my arrival," said Fakrash, "I heard thee lamenting the difficulties of the task—wherein do they consist?"

"Oh," said Horace, "it's a little difficult to please all the different people concerned, and myself too. I want to make something of it that I shall be proud of, and that will give me a reputation. It's a large house, and there will be a good deal of work in it—but I shall manage it all right."

"This is a great undertaking indeed," remarked the Jinnee, after he had asked various by no means unintelligent questions and received the answers. "But be persuaded that it shall all turn out most fortunately and thou shalt obtain great renown. And now," he concluded, "I am

"THIS IS A GREAT UNDERTAKING INDEED."

compelled to take leave of thee, for I am still without any certain tidings of Suleyman."

"You mustn't let me keep you," said Horace, who had been on thorns for some minutes lest Beevor should return and find him with his mysterious visitor. "You see," he added, instructively, "so long as you *will* neglect your own much more important affairs to look after mine, you can hardly expect to make *much* progress, can you?"

"How excellent is the saying," replied the Jinnee: "'The time which is spent in doing kindnesses call it not wasted.'"

"Yes, that's very good," said Horace, feeling driven to silence this maxim, if possible, with one of his own invention. "But *we* have a saying too—how does it go? Ah, I remember. 'It is possible for a kindness to be more inconvenient than an injury.'"

"Marvellously gifted was he who discovered such a saying!" cried Fakrash.

"I imagine," said Horace, "he learnt it from his own experience. By the way, what place were you thinking of drawing—I mean trying—next for Suleyman?"

"I purpose to repair to Nineveh, and inquire there."

"Capital," said Ventimore, with hearty approval, for he hoped that this would take the Jinnee some little time. "Wonderful city, Nineveh, from all I've heard—though not quite what it used to be, perhaps. Then there's Babylon—you might go on there. And if you shouldn't hear of him there, why not strike down into Central Africa, and do that thoroughly? Or South America, it's a pity to lose any chance—you've never been to South America yet?"

"I have not so much as heard of such a country, and how should Suleyman be there?"

"Pardon me, I didn't say he *was* there. All I meant to convey was, that he's quite as likely to be there as anywhere else. But if you're going to Nineveh first, you'd better lose no more time, for I've always understood that it's rather an awkward place to get at—though, probably, *you* won't find it very difficult."

"I care not," said Fakrash, "though the search be long, for in travel there are five advantages——"

"I know," interrupted Horace, "so don't stop to describe them now. I should like to see you fairly started, and you really mustn't think it necessary to break off your search again on my account, because, thanks to you, I shall get on splendidly alone for the future—if you'll kindly see that that merchandise is removed."

"Thine abode shall not be encumbered with it for another hour," said the Jinnee. "Oh, thou judicious one, in whose estimation wealth is of no value, know that I have never encountered a mortal who pleased me as thou hast; and moreover, be assured that such magnanimity as thine shall not go without a recompense!"

"How often must I tell you," said Horace, in a glow of impatience, "that I am already much more than recompensed? Now, my kind, generous old friend," he added, with an emotion that was not wholly insincere, "the time has come to bid you farewell—for ever. Let me picture you as revisiting your former haunts, penetrating to quarters of the globe (for, whether you are aware of it or not, this earth of ours *is* a globe) hitherto unknown to you, refreshing your mind by foreign travel and the study of mankind—but never, never for a moment losing sight of your main object, the eventual discovery of and reconciliation with Suleyman (on whom be peace!). That is the only, the greatest, happiness you can give me now. Good-bye, and *bon voyage!*"

"GOOD-BYE, AND BON VOYAGE!"

"May Allah never deprive thy friends of

thy presence!" returned the Jinnee, who was apparently touched by this exordium, "for truly thou art a most excellent young man!"

And stepping back into the fireplace, he was gone in an instant.

Ventimore sank back in his chair with a sigh of relief. He had begun to fear that the Jinnee never would take himself off, but he had gone at last—and for good.

He was half ashamed of himself for feeling so glad, for Fakrash was a good-natured old thing enough in his way. Only he *would* overdo things: he had no sense of proportion. "Why," thought Horace, "if a fellow expressed a modest wish for a canary in a cage, he's just the sort of old Jinnee to bring him a whole covey of rocs in an aviary about ten times the size of the Crystal Palace. However, he *does* understand now that I can't take anything more from him, and he isn't offended either, so *that's* all settled. Now I can set to work and knock off these plans in peace and quietness."

But he had not done much before he heard sounds in the next room which told him that Beevor had returned at last. He had been expected back from the country for the last day or two, and it was fortunate that he had delayed so long, thought Ventimore, as he went in to see him and to tell him the unexpected piece of good fortune that he himself had met with since they last met. It is needless to say that, in giving his account, he abstained from any mention of the brass bottle or the Jinnee, as unessential elements in his story.

Beevor's congratulations were quite as cordial as could be expected, as soon as he fully understood that no hoax was intended. "Well, old man," he said, "I *am* glad. I really am, you know. To think of a prize like that coming to you the very first time! And you don't even know how this Mr. Wackerbath came to hear of you—just happened to see your name up outside and came in, I expect. Why, I daresay if I hadn't chanced to go away as I did—and about a couple of paltry two thousand pound houses, too! Ah, well, I don't grudge you your luck, though it *does* seem rather——' It was worth waiting for; you'll be cutting *me* out before long—if you don't make a mess of this job. I mean, you know, old chap, if you don't go and give your City man a Gothic castle when what he wants is something with plenty of plate-glass windows and a Corinthian portico. That's the rock I see ahead for *you*. You mustn't mind my giving you a word of warning!"

"Oh, no," said Ventimore; "but I sha'n't give him either a Gothic castle or plenty of plate-glass. I venture to think he'll be pleased with the general idea as I'm working it out."

"Let's hope so," said Beevor. "If you get into any difficulty, you know," he added, with a touch of patronage, "just you come to me."

"Thanks," said Horace, "I will. But I'm getting on very fairly at present."

"I should rather like to see what you've made of it. I might be able to give you a wrinkle here and there."

"It's awfully good of you, but I think I'd rather you didn't see the plans till they're quite finished," said Horace. The truth was that he was perfectly aware that the other would not be in sympathy with his ideas; and Horace, who had just been suffering from a cold fit of depression about his work, rather shrank from any kind of criticism.

"Oh, just as you please!" said Beevor, a little stiffly; "you always *were* an obstinate beggar. I've had a certain amount of experience, you know, in my poor little pottering way, and I thought I might possibly have saved you a cropper or two. But if you think you can manage better alone—only don't get bolted with by one of those architectural hobbies of yours, that's all."

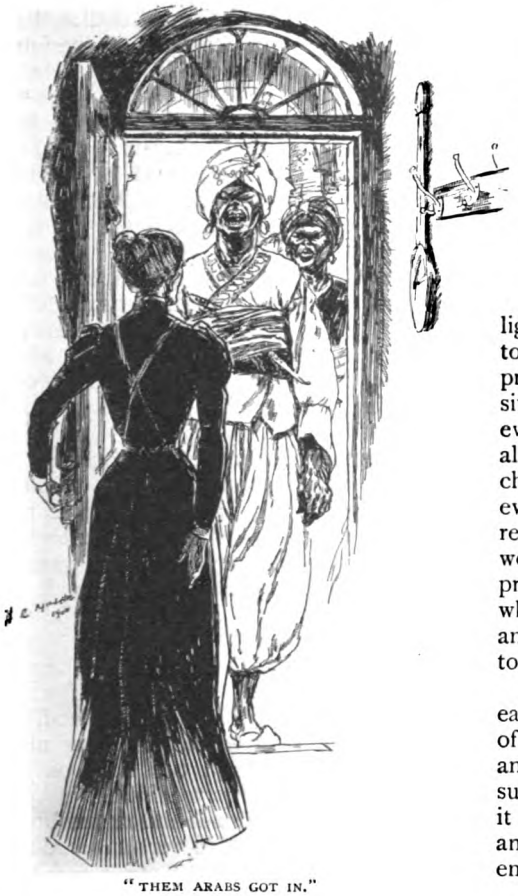
"All right, old fellow. I'll ride my hobby on the curb," said Horace, laughing, as he went back to his own office, where he found that all his former certainty and enjoyment of his work had returned to him, and by the end of the day he had made so much progress that his designs needed only a few finishing touches to be complete enough for his client's inspection.

Better still, on returning to his rooms that evening to change before going to Kensington, he found that the admirable Fakrash had kept his promise—every chest, sack, and bale had been cleared away.

"Them camels come back for the things this afternoon, sir," said Mrs. Rapkin, "and it put me in a fluster at first, for I made sure you'd locked your door and took the key. But I must have been mistook—leastways, them Arabs got in somehow. I hope you meant everything to go back?"

"Quite," said Horace; "I saw the—the person who sent them this morning, and told him there was nothing I cared for enough to keep."

"And like his impidence sending you a lot o' rubbish like that on approval—and on camels too!" declared Mrs. Rapkin. "I'm



"THEM ARABS GOT IN."

sure I don't know what them advertising firms will try next—pushing, *I* call it."

Now that everything was gone, Horace felt a little natural regret and doubt whether he need have been quite so uncompromising in his refusal of the treasures. "I might have kept some of those tissues and things for Sylvia," he thought; "and she loves pearls. And a prayer-carpet would have pleased the Professor tremendously. But no, after all, it wouldn't have done. Sylvia couldn't go about in pearls the size of new potatoes, and the Professor would only have ragged me for more reckless extravagance. Besides, if I'd taken any of the Jinnee's gifts, he might keep on pouring more in, till I should be just where I was before—or worse off, really, because I couldn't decently refuse them, then. So it's best as it is."

And really, considering his temperament and the peculiar nature of his position, it is not easy to see how he could have arrived at any other conclusion.

CHAPTER VIII.

BACHELOR'S QUARTERS.

HORACE was feeling particularly happy as he walked back the next evening to Vincent Square. He had the consciousness of having done a good day's work, for the sketch plans for Mr. Wackerbath's mansion were actually completed and dispatched to his business address, while Horace now felt a comfortable assurance that his designs would more than satisfy his client.

But it was not that which made him so light of heart. That night his rooms were to be honoured for the first time by Sylvia's presence. She would tread upon his carpet, sit in his chairs, comment upon, and perhaps even handle, his books and ornaments—and all of them would retain something of her charm for ever after. If she only came! For even now he could not quite believe that she really would; that some untoward event would not make a point of happening to prevent her, just as he sometimes doubted whether his engagement was not too sweet and wonderful to be true—or, at all events, to last.

As to the dinner, his mind was tolerably easy, for he had settled the remaining details of the *menu* with his landlady that morning, and he could hope that, without being so sumptuous as to excite the Professor's wrath, it would still be not altogether unworthy—and what goods could be rare and dainty enough?—to be set before Sylvia.

He would have liked to provide champagne, but he knew that that wine would savour of ostentation in the Professor's judgment, so he had contented himself instead with claret, a sound vintage which he knew he could depend upon. Flowers, he thought, were clearly permissible, and he had called at a florist's on his way and got some chrysanthemums of palest yellow and deepest terra-cotta, the finest he could see. Some of them would look well on the centre of the table in an old Nankin blue and white bowl he had; the rest he could arrange about the room: there would just be time to see to all that before dressing.

Occupied with these thoughts, he turned into Vincent Square, which looked vaster than ever with the murky haze, inclosed by its high railings, and under a wide expanse of steel-blue sky, across which the clouds were driving fast like ships in full sail scudding for harbour before a storm. Against the mist below, the young and nearly leafless trees showed flat, black profiles as of pressed seaweed, and the sky immediately above the

"HE GOT SOME CHRYSANTHEMUMS."

house-tops was tinged with a sullen red from miles of lighted streets; from the river came the long-drawn tooting of tugs, mingled with the more distant wails and hysterical shrieks of railway engines on the Lambeth lines.

And now he reached the old semi-detached house in which he lodged, and noticed for the first time how the trellis-work of the veranda made, with the bared creepers and hanging baskets, a kind of decorative pattern against the windows, which were suffused with a roseate glow that looked warm, and comfortable, and hospitable. He wondered whether Sylvia would notice it when she arrived.

He passed under the old wrought-iron arch that once held an oil-lamp, and up a short but rather steep flight of steps, which led to a brick porch built out at the side. Then he let himself in, and stood spellbound with perplexed amazement—for he was in a strange house.

In place of the modest passage with the yellow marble wall-paper, the mahogany hat-stand, and the elderly barometer in a state of chronic depression which he knew so well, he found an arched octagonal entrance-hall, with arabesques of blue, crimson, and gold, and richly-embroidered hangings; the floor was marble, and from a shallow basin of alabaster in the centre a perfumed fountain rose and fell with a lulling patter.

"I must have mistaken the number," he thought, quite forgetting that his latch-key had fitted, and he was just about to retreat before his intrusion was discovered when the hangings parted and Mrs. Rapkin presented herself, making so deplorably incongruous a figure in such surroundings, and looking so bewildered and woe-begone, that Horace, in spite of his own increasing uneasiness, had some difficulty in keeping his gravity.

"Oh, Mr. Ventimore, sir," she lamented; "whatever *will* you go and do next, I wonder? To think of your going and having the whole place done up and altered out of knowledge like this, without a word of warning! If any halterations were required, I *do* think as me and Rapkin had the right to be consulted."

Horace let all his chrysanthemums drop unheeded into the fountain. He understood now: indeed, he seemed in some way to have understood almost from the first, only he would not admit it even to himself.

The irrepressible Jinnee was at the bottom of this, of course. He remembered now having made that unfortunate remark the day before about the limited accommodation his rooms afforded.

Clearly Fakrash must have taken a mental note of it, and, with that insatiable munificence which was one of his worst failings, had determined, by way of a pleasant surprise, to entirely refurnish and redecorate the apartments according to his own ideas.

It was extremely kind of him; it showed a truly grateful disposition—"but, oh!" as Horace thought, in the bitterness of his soul, "if he would only learn to let well alone and mind his own business!"

However, the thing was done now, and he must accept the responsibility for it, since he could hardly disclose the truth. "Didn't I mention I was having some alterations made?" he said, carelessly. "They've got the work done rather sooner than I expected. Were—were they long over it?"

"I'm sure I can't tell you, sir, having stepped out to get some things I wanted in for to-night; and Rapkin, he was round the corner at his reading-room; and when I

come back it was all done and the workmen gone 'ome; and how they could have finished such a job in the time beats me altogether, for when we 'ad the men in to do the back kitchen they took ten days over it."

"Well," said Horace, evading this point, "however they've done this, they've done it remarkably well — you'll admit that, Mrs. Rapkin?"

"That's as may be, sir," said Mrs. Rapkin, with a sniff, "but it ain't *my* taste, nor yet I don't think it will be Rapkin's taste when he comes to see it."

It was not Ventimore's taste either, though he was not going to confess it. "Sorry for that, Mrs. Rapkin," he said, "but I've no time to talk about it now. I must rush upstairs and dress."

"Begging your pardon, sir, but that's a total unpossibility—for they've been and took away the staircase."

"Taken away the staircase? Nonsense!" cried Horace.

"So *I* think, Mr. Ventimore — but it's what them men have done, and if you don't believe me, come and see for yourself."

She drew the hangings aside, and revealed to Ventimore's astonished gaze a vast pillared hall with a lofty domed roof, from which hung several lamps, diffusing a subdued radiance. High up in the wall, on his left, were the two windows which he judged to have formerly belonged to his sitting-room (for either from delicacy or inability, or simply because it had not occurred to him, the Jinnee had not interfered with the external structure), but the windows were now masked by a perforated and gilded lattice, which accounted for the pattern Horace had noticed from without. The walls were covered with blue and white Oriental tiles, and a raised platform of alabaster on which were divans ran round two sides of the hall, while the side opposite to him was pierced with horseshoe-shaped arches, apparently leading to other apartments. The centre of the marble floor was spread with costly rugs and piles of cushions, their rich hues glowing through the gold with which they were intricately embroidered.

"Well," said the unhappy Horace, scarcely knowing what he was saying,

"IT ALL LOOKS VERY COSY, MRS. RAPKIN."

"it — it all looks very *cosy*, Mrs. Rapkin."

"It's not for me to say, sir; but I should like to know where you thought of dining?"

"Where?" said Horace. "Why, here, of course. There's plenty of room."

"There isn't a table left in the house," said Mrs. Rapkin; "so, unless you'd wish the cloth laid on the floor——"

"Oh, there must be a table somewhere," said Horace, impatiently, "or you can borrow

one. Don't *make* difficulties, Mrs. Rapkin. Rig up anything you like . . . now I must be off and dress."

He got rid of her, and, on entering one of the archways, discovered a smaller room, in cedar-wood incrusted with ivory and mother-o'-pearl, which was evidently his bedroom. A gorgeous robe, stiff with gold and glittering with ancient gems, was laid out for him—for the Jinnee had thought of everything—but Ventimore, naturally, preferred his own evening clothes.

"Mr. Rapkin," he shouted, going to another arch that seemed to communicate with the basement.

"Sir?" replied his landlord, who had just returned from his "reading-room," and now appeared, looking pale and wild, as was, perhaps, intelligible in the circumstances. As he entered his unfamiliar marble halls he staggered and his red eyes rolled and his mouth gaped in a cod-like fashion. "They've been at it 'ere, too, seemin'ly," he remarked, huskily.

"There have been a few changes," said Horace, quietly, "as you can see. You don't happen to know where they've put my dress-clothes, do you?"

"I don't 'appen to know where they've put nothink. Your dress-clothes? Why, I dunno where they've bin and put our little parler, where me and Maria 'ave set of a hevenin' all these years regular. I dunno where they've put the pantry, nor yet the bath-room, with 'ot and cold water laid on at my own expense. And you arsk me to find your hevenin' soot! I consider, sir, I consider that a unwall—that a most unwarranterrible liberty have bin took at my expense."

"My good man, don't talk rubbish!" said Horace.

"I'm talking to you about what *I know*, and I assert that an Englishman's 'ome is his cashle, and nobody's got the right when his backsh turned to go and make a 'Ummums of it. Not *nobody* 'asn't!"

"Make a *what* of it?" cried Ventimore.

"A 'Ummums—that's English, ain't it? A bloomin' Turkish baths! Who do you suppose is goin' to take apartments furnished in this 'ere ridic'loush style? What am I goin' to say to my landlord? It'll about ruing me, this will; and after you bein' a lodger 'ere for five year and more, and regarded by me and Maria in the light of one of the fam'ly. It's 'ard—it's bloomin' 'ard!"

"Now, look here," said Ventimore, sharply—for it was obvious that Mr. Rapkin's studies had been lightened by copious refreshment—"pull yourself together, man, and listen to me."

"I respeckfully decline to pull myshelf togerrer f'r anybody livin'," said Mr. Rapkin, with a noble air. "I shtan' 'ere upon my dignity as a man, sir. I shay, I shtand 'ere upon——" here he waved his hand, and sat down suddenly upon the marble floor.

"You can stand on anything you like—or

"HE SAT DOWN SUDDENLY UPON THE FLOOR."

can," said Horace; "but hear what I've got to say. The—the people who made all these alterations went beyond my instructions. I never wanted the house interfered with like this. Still, if your landlord doesn't see that its value is immensely improved, he's a fool, that's all. Anyway, I'll take care *you* sha'n't suffer. If I have to put everything back in its former state I will, at my own expense. So don't bother any more about *that*."

"You're a gen'l'man, Mr. Ventimore," said Rapkin, cautiously regaining his feet. "There's no mishtaking a gen'l'man. *I'm* a gen'l'man."

"Of course you are," said Horace, genially, "and I'll tell you how you're going to show

it. You're going straight downstairs to get your good wife to pour some cold water over your head; and then you will finish dressing, see what you can do to get a table of some sort and lay it for dinner, and be ready to announce my friends when they arrive, and wait afterwards. Do you see?"

"That will be all ri', Mr. Ventimore," said Rapkin, who was not far gone enough to be beyond understanding or obeying. "You leave it entirely to me. I'll unnertake that your friends shall be made comforrable, perfelly comforrable. I've lived as butler in the besht, the mosht exclu—most arishto—you know the sort o' fam'lies I'm tryin' to r'member—and—and everything was always all ri', and *I* shall be all ri' in a few minutes."

With this assurance he stumbled down stairs, leaving Horace relieved to some extent. Rapkin would be sober enough after his head had been under the tap for a few minutes, and in any case there would be the hired waiter to rely upon.

If he could only find out where his evening clothes were! He returned to his room and made another frantic search—but they were nowhere to be found; and as he could not bring himself to receive his guests in his ordinary morning costume—which the Professor would probably construe as a deliberate slight, and which would certainly seem a solecism in Mrs. Futvoye's eyes, if not in her daughter's—he decided to put on the Eastern robes, with the exception of a turban, which he could not manage to wind round his head.

"HE DECIDED TO PUT ON THE EASTERN ROBES."

Thus arrayed, he re-entered the domed hall, when he was annoyed to find that no attempt had been made as yet to prepare a dinner-table, and he was just looking forlornly round for a bell when Rapkin appeared. He had apparently followed Horace's advice, for his hair looked wet and sleek, and he was comparatively sober.

"This is too bad!" cried Horace; "my friends may be here at any moment now—and nothing done. You don't propose to wait at table like that, do you?" he added, as he noted the man's overcoat and the comforter round his throat.

"I do not propose to wait in any garments whatsoever," said Rapkin; "I'm a-goin' out, I am."

"Very well," said Horace; "then send the waiter up—I suppose he's come?"

"He come—but he went away again—I told him as he wouldn't be required."

"You told him that!" Horace said, angrily, and then controlled himself. "Come, Rapkin, be reasonable. You can't really mean to leave your wife to cook the dinner, and serve it too!"

"She ain't intending to do neither; she've left the house already."

"You must fetch her back," cried Horace. "Good heavens, man, *can't* you see what a fix you're leaving me in? My friends have started long ago—it's too late to wire to them, or make any other arrangements."

There was a knock, as he spoke, at the front door; and odd enough was the familiar sound of the cast-iron knocker in that Arabian hall.

"There they are!" he said, and the idea of meeting them at the door and proposing an instant adjournment to a restaurant occurred to him—till he suddenly recollected that he would have to change and try to find some money, even for that. "For the last time, Rapkin," he cried, in despair, "do you mean to tell me there's no dinner ready?"

"Oh," said Rapkin, "there's dinner right enough, and a lot o' barbarious furriners downstairs a-cookin' of it—that's what broke Maria's 'art—to see it all took out of her 'ands, after the trouble she'd gone to."

"But I must have somebody to wait," exclaimed Horace.

"You've got waiters enough, as far as that goes. But if you expect a hordinary Christian man to wait along of a lot o' narsty niggers, and be at their beck and call, you're mistook, sir, for I'm going to sleep the night at my brother-in-law's and take his advice, he bein' a doorkeeper at a solicitor's orfice and knowing the law, about this 'ere business, and so I wish you a good hevening, and 'oping your dinner will be to your liking and satisfaction."

"THE FUTVOYES HAD COME."

He went out by the farther archway, while from the entrance-hall Horace could hear voices he knew only too well. The Futvoyes had come; well, at all events, it seemed that there would be something for them to eat, since Fakrash, in his anxiety to do the thing thoroughly, had furnished both the feast and attendance himself—but who was there to announce the guests? Where were these waiters Rapkin had spoken of? Ought he to go and bring in his visitors himself?

These questions answered themselves the next instant, for, as he stood there under the dome, the curtains of the central arch were drawn with a rattle, and disclosed a double line of tall slaves in rich raiment, their onyx eyes rolling and their teeth flashing in their chocolate-hued countenances, as they salaamed.

Between this double line stood Professor and Mrs. Futvoye and Sylvia, who had just removed their wraps and were gazing in undisguised astonishment on the splendours which met their view.

Horace advanced to receive them; he felt he was in for it now, and the only course left him was to put as good a face as he could on the matter, and trust to luck to pull him through without discovery or disaster.

(*To be continued.*)

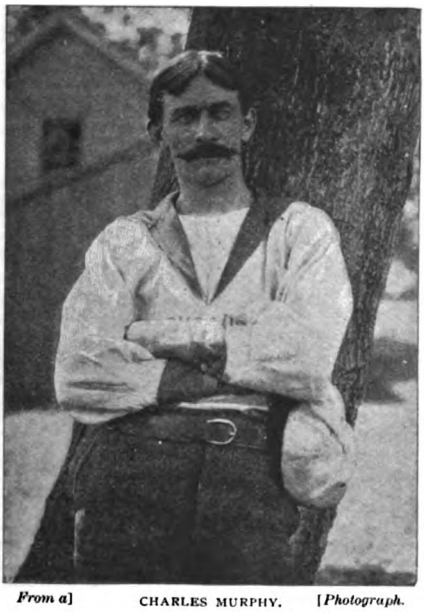
Cycling at a Mile a Minute.

THE TRUE STORY OF MURPHY'S GREAT CYCLING FEAT.

By Frederick A. Talbot.

SOME months ago a thrill of excitement passed through cycledom at the announcement that the well-known American cyclist, Charles M. Murphy, of Brooklyn, had succeeded in covering a mile in 60sec., paced by a locomotive. Cyclists rubbed their eyes in astonishment, while the cycle Press with its characteristic incredulity urged its readers to accept the accomplishment of such a remarkable performance *cum grano salis*, slily emphasizing the fact that the record was instituted in America, whither so many extraordinary yarns from time to time have emanated.

But the record was neither the invention of a highly imaginative brain nor a newspaper hoax. The following facts and photographs will comprehensively illustrate how this remarkable race against time was performed, thus conclusively proving that Murphy's record was genuine in every detail.



From a] CHARLES MURPHY. *[Photograph.*

The race was run on June 30th of last year. The course was a section of the Long Island Railroad, New York, U.S.A., and the pacer was one of the fleetest locomotives belonging to the company. Mr. H. B. Fullerton, special agent of the passenger department of that railroad company, was solely responsible for the idea, and when I interviewed him upon the matter on behalf of The Strand Magazine, he courteously rendered me all the information in his power.

"It must not be considered," began Mr. Fullerton, "that this race was contested on the spur of the moment. I, in company with the other officials of the railroad, went most carefully into the details of the scheme, and some months elapsed before our arrangements were so satisfactorily completed as to enable the race to be run."

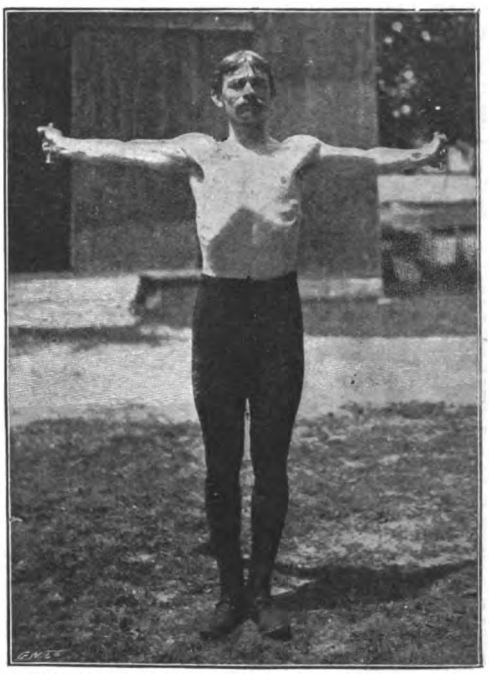
"What first induced you to decide upon such a unique feat?" I asked.

"Well, you see," he replied, "when I received my appointment I was specially urged by the company to study the convenience and requirements of the cycling public, so that the traffic of the railroad by this new class of travel might be considerably increased. Long Island is the veritable El Dorado of the cyclist. The scenery is pretty, the roads are level, well constructed, and maintained in constant repair. Last year the New York State division of the League of American Wheelmen held their meeting at Patchoque, Long Island. Naturally, therefore, I sought for an attraction to draw cyclists to this spot. Various suggestions occurred to me, but finally I determined to give Charles Murphy, the fast cyclist, a chance to cover the mile in the minute, or, if possible, in less time. I have been an intimate friend of Murphy's for several years, and I have always been impressed with his tremendous pace, marvellous clear-headedness, and nerve. I knew very well that a clear head and great nerve were more imperative in the contemplated trial than great speed. Therefore, I broached my idea to Murphy."

"And how did he receive the suggestion?"

"He accepted it with alacrity. Curiously enough, he had petitioned almost every railroad in the United States during the past five years to allow him to be paced by a locomotive. His endeavours, however, were always in vain. This was luck indeed. Murphy was willing to ride on any track that I could provide, even on the regular road-bed of the railway itself if no other were available. Of course, I quite realized that

he would need to have a perfectly straight, smooth track, and, if at all possible, fairly level. Now that Murphy was ready to undergo the trial I laid the matter before the President and General Superintendent of the railroad, and received their sanction. Thereupon I at once set to work upon the necessary details. In this part of the work I was admirably assisted by Mr. W. F. Potter, the General Superintendent; Mr. L. P. Pairo, Superintendent of Traffic; Mr. P. D. Ford, Chief Engineer; Mr. J. H. Cummin, Superintendent of Bridges; Mr. C. L. Addison, Permanent-Way Superintendent; Mr. L. S. Wells, Superintendent of Telegraphs; and Mr. S. F. Prince, jun., Locomotive Superintendent. Had it not been for the hearty co-operation of each of these departments the trial would never have been performed. They assisted me in every possible way, and each superintendent personally attended to, and carried out, all the details concerning his own department."



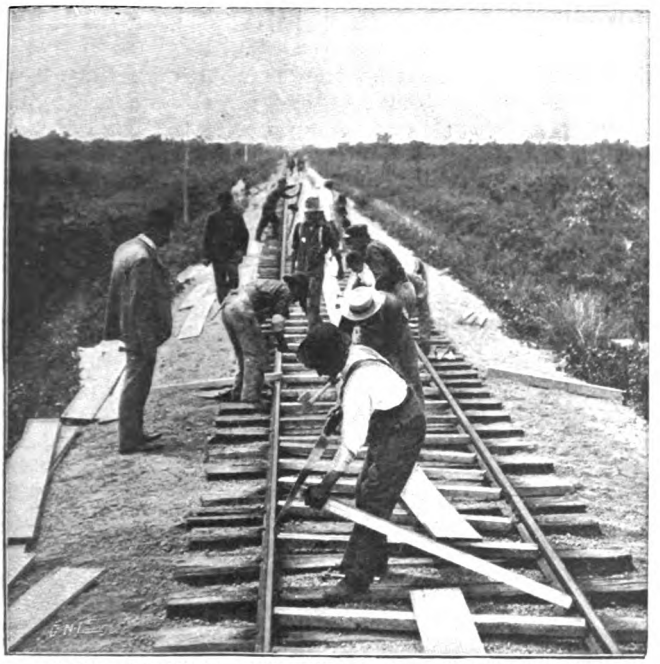
MURPHY IN TRAINING—USING THE ELECTRIC DUMB-BELLS FOR WRISTS.
From a] [*Photograph.*

"I suppose you experienced a great difficulty in selecting a sufficient length of track that coincided with all your requirements, as to being straight, smooth, and level?" I inquired.

"Not so difficult as you would at first imagine," replied Mr. Fullerton. "Long Island is fairly level country. The chief engineer and myself examined the various sections of our system, and at last found a stretch of tangent track over three miles in length. The next thing was to find at least a mile of this level, and this was done where we figured that he could slow up sufficiently in a quarter of a mile. We then tested our engines to see how long a distance was necessary as a start to enable the desired speed of a mile a minute being attained. We found that any of our passenger locomotives, comprising regular equipment of tender (filled with water and coal) and car could make a mile easily in a minute, the average time for covering the distance being only 52sec., while a start of about three-quarters of a mile was necessary in which to get up the requisite speed. Of course, I naturally desired to make this starting distance as short as possible, so as not to make Murphy ride at this high rate of speed any farther distance than was absolutely essential."

While these requisite details were gradually assuming concrete shape Murphy was undergoing a vigorous training, to remove all superfluous adipose tissue, so that he might attempt what was to him the *magnum opus* of his life under the best possible advantages. Then, again, to strengthen the muscles of his wrists Murphy exercised with electric dumb-bells.

The track upon which Murphy was to ride was made as follows: Stout wooden joists were firmly secured in a lateral position between the rails, and upon these were placed longitudinally five 10in. boards, side by side, so that the railroad was converted into a wooden pathway. Even in this task the Long Island Railroad established a record, for Superintendent Cummin laid 60,000ft. of timber with sixty men in one day. At the end of the car behind which Murphy was to ride was a huge hood, the object of which was to shield the cyclist from the rush of air displaced by the locomotive. This hood was built right up from the track to the roof of the car. It projected 11ft. 4in. from the back of the car, but as, of course, the gangway of the vehicle had to be inclosed, only 6ft. really protected Murphy, which was quite sufficient, if he could succeed in keeping up to the pacer. In our illustration on page 296, showing the interior of the wind shield, will be noticed a kind of projecting cross-bar. This was to act as a buffer, to prevent Murphy from getting beneath the car.



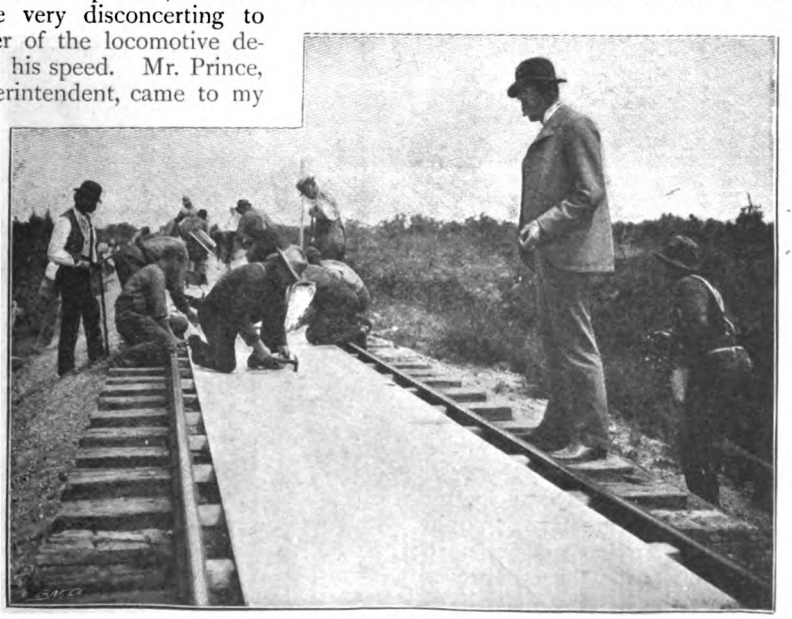
LAYING THE TRACK—PUTTING IN THE JOISTS AND CENTRE-BOARD.
From a Photograph.

"Of course," resumed Mr. Fullerton, "there was one very important point to be borne in mind: the locomotive must not vary its speed. That is to say, if the first quarter of a mile were run in 20sec., the second quarter of a mile must not be run in 10sec. in order to make up time, since I knew it would be very disconcerting to Murphy if the driver of the locomotive decreased or increased his speed. Mr. Prince, the locomotive superintendent, came to my assistance in this respect with Sam Booth, one of the railroad's most experienced and trusted drivers.

"On the day before the great event a trial trip was run to see if everything was in perfect and smooth - working order. Murphy had, of course, previously tried the track, and expressed himself as satisfied with it. Every condition was exactly the same on this rehearsal as in the final trip, wind shield, buffer, and everything being in position. Murphy rode a bicycle geared to 116. I instructed the driver to cover the mile in 1·25min., but cautioned him most carefully to maintain the same speed throughout the minute as he made in the first fifteen seconds.

"Everything passed off satisfactorily, Murphy covering the distance in 65sec. This was 20sec. quicker than I anticipated, but the explanation was that the engine had gathered momentum a little faster than was expected during the first quarter of a mile, and the driver, obeying my strict injunction as to regularity of speed, had wisely kept it up. Murphy rode wonderfully well. For the entire distance he did not leave the middle plank, which was only 10in. wide, and I do not think his wheel deviated beyond the width of a newspaper column.

"This trial run was interesting in many respects. I had entertained some fears as to what would happen if Murphy, unable to keep up to the locomotive, had dropped outside the wind shield. There were bound to be



From a] FINISHING THE TRACK. *[Photograph.*

wind skirls, and I knew Murphy would fare badly if he were caught in the vortex of air. I had made various experiments, however, with silk handkerchiefs, kites, pieces of paper, etc., and found that the air displaced by the locomotive, and rushing in furious currents on either side of the car in almost parallel lines, did not come together immediately behind the train, as is generally supposed, but met in two swirling circles something like 200ft. behind the train while travelling at sixty miles an hour. Consequently there was absolutely no back draught, nor any wind pressure upon Murphy in any way. Some of the spectators on board the car proved this fact by holding a handkerchief where Murphy was riding. It never fluttered in the least, while the hair on the cyclist's head was not disturbed a particle, as would otherwise have been the case had any breeze or current of air existed. The cyclist rode in an absolutely still atmosphere. I had thoroughly explained to Murphy the result of my experiments regarding the whirlwinds, so that he knew pretty well what to expect should he lag too far behind the pacer.

MURPHY AND SAM BOOTH, THE ENGINE-DRIVER.
From a Photograph.

"I must not forget to mention one curious incident that occurred during the trial. I had previously arranged with Murphy that, when the mile was covered, I, who was to lay down flat upon the platform just above Murphy's head, would wave my cap across a white board fixed just in front of him, and upon which he would keep his eyes. On receiving this signal, he was to decrease his speed, to drop gradually out of the wind shield, and to dismount in the ordinary way. He carried out my suggestion to the letter, but, unfortunately, he was caught in the wind skirls, and twisted about considerably, though he did not swerve from his track. Realizing the situation, he gathered speed once more and caught the train up again, and was hauled on board.

"Now that Murphy had acquitted himself so splendidly in the trial trip, personally I did not entertain the slightest doubt as to his ability to accomplish the distance in a minute, nor did I for a moment apprehend any danger or serious results. Murphy was quite in accord with me in this feeling of security.

"The next day the final attempt was

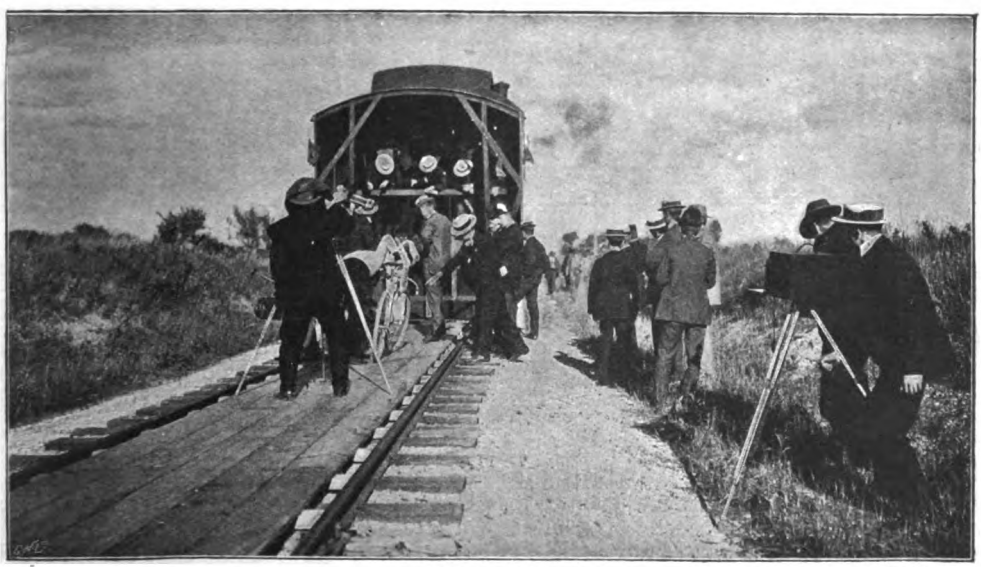
From a] MURPHY AFTER THE TRIAL TRIP. *[Photograph.*

made. Mr. James Sullivan, whose reputation is world wide, and whose character is unassailable, acted as referee, while he was supported by four other well-known timekeepers, whose watches were in first-class condition ; there were also various Pressmen and representatives from other railroads on the train, so that there can be no possible question regarding the time made, or the thoroughly sportsmanlike manner in which the contest was carried out.

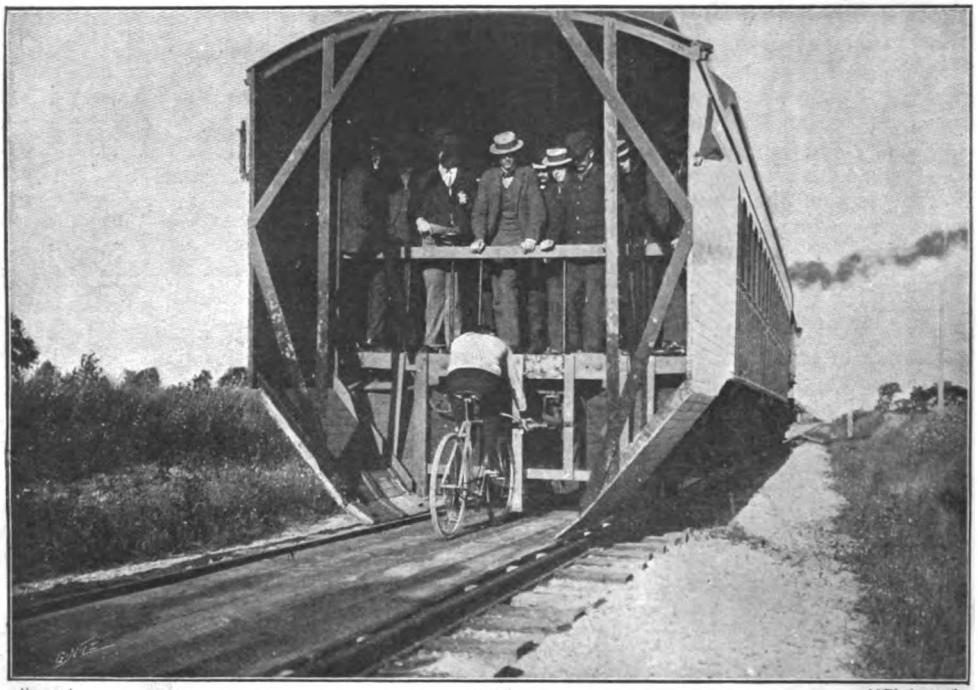
"Murphy, only attired in a sweater and full-length tights, mounted his cycle, which was geared to 120—four points higher than the one he rode the previous day—and took up his position. We started almost imperceptibly, and the engine gathered momentum with every second. By the time she entered upon the mile run she had easily gained a velocity of sixty miles an hour. Murphy clung to the pacer with marvellous tenacity throughout the whole mile. He did not ride quite so steadily as on the previous occasion, but this he subsequently explained was due to the fact that the bicycle was of a higher gear than that to which he had become accustomed during his training.

"After his experience at the finish of the former trial I had, after careful consideration, proposed to Murphy that, instead of dropping out from behind the wind shield and slowing down alone and cutting the whirlwinds, he should ride up to the train when the mile was finished and that I would haul him on to the car. Although this seemed a startling proposition at first, working with a man of such perfect self-control as Murphy it was really the easiest thing to do, and the danger element was reduced tremendously.

"As we finished the mile Sullivan gave the word, and I flashed my cap across the white board in front of Murphy. The cyclist, acting on my instructions, immediately dropped back about 25ft., and the air brakes were applied to the train so gently and steadily that not the slightest vibration was felt—in fact, those on the car were unconscious of the application of the brakes. I gave another signal, and Murphy immediately spurted and caught us up again. Mr. Cummin and myself put a hand under each shoulder and lifted him firmly off the wheel. Murphy put his right foot through the top bar of the cycle until I could get hold of it with my other hand, and then both rider and cycle were hauled on the car. It was a hazardous performance with the train rushing along at sixty miles an hour, but it was successfully accomplished. Thus it was that Murphy had established the world's cycling record by riding a mile in 60sec., certainly one of the greatest cycling feats ever attempted. He had not been supported or guided by any ropes or contrivance of any description to aid him in his run. He had simply ridden behind the railway train in just the same manner as he would have



From a] GETTING READY. *[Photograph.*

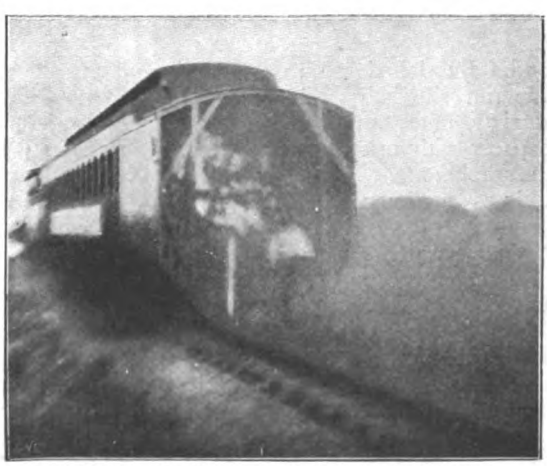


From a] OFF! *[Photograph.*

ridden upon the asphalt track behind the conventional cycling pacer."

Our last photograph, which was snapshotted about 30yds. from the finish, shows Mr. Fullerton and Superintendent Cummin ready to assist Murphy off the cycle. The intrepid cyclist can scarcely be discerned through the dust that was thrown into the air by the travelling train, but a comprehensive idea of the magnificent manner in which he clung to the pacer is conveyed. At the instant the photograph was taken he was only about 4ft. distant from his guiding star, the white board, which may plainly be seen.

"There is one thing I must say in conclusion," remarked Mr. Fullerton. "I have seen some of the English newspapers in which it was asserted that I, as a Press agent, had fooled the newspaper men of the States, by concocting a vivid picture of a cyclist being paced by an engine. There are two errors in such an assertion: one is that I am not a Press agent; and the second is that I do not believe the man is yet born who can fool the newspaper men of New York, or, in fact, the clever writers of any large city on the globe."



MURPHY FINISHING THE MILE IN A CLOUD OF DUST.
From a Photograph.

There may be a great divergence of opinion as to the foolhardiness of such a cycling feat, but certainly as an example of physical endurance, clear-headedness, and iron nerve, Murphy's achievement would be difficult to beat.

In Nature's Workshop.

By Grant Allen.

VIII.—ARMOUR-PLATED ANIMALS.

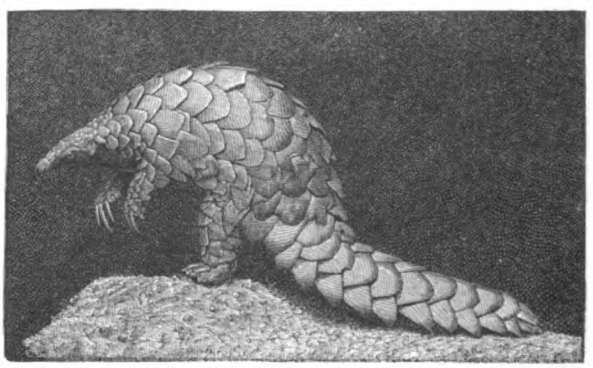
MEN and monkeys, we all know, are imitative creatures; but there are few departments of human life where man has been so entirely anticipated and at the same time surpassed by the lower animals as in the invention of armour. His cunningest devices of the mailed fist order were none of them original. If you examine a fine and fully-developed suit of plate-armour, in the form which it assumed at its highest zenith in the fifteenth century, you will find that the trunk and limbs were completely inclosed in a splendidly-fitting jointed case of iron plates, all exquisitely polished. The joints of these plates were arranged in the most ingenious manner so as to move freely over and under one another, without exposing any part of the body for a moment to the deadly chance of a sword-lunge or a lance-thrust. For example, the scale-like pieces which covered the shoulders were cleverly protected at the edges by fan-shaped projections, making it impossible for an enemy, however quick and deft, to get at the line of junction. The knee-caps, the shoes, the elbows, the gauntlets, all the minor parts of the caparison, were admirably designed with great skill and care, so as to afford the utmost possible security to the wearer, and yet interfere as little as practicable with his freedom of movement. The suit, as a whole, was a triumphant product of the armourer's art. Yet if you look at the lobster's tail represented in No. 10, you will see at a glance that all these clever devices of man's imagining had been invented and patented long before by nature, and that the elaborate workmanship of the Plantagenet craftsmen, who cased knight and horse for the battle-field or the tournament in movable plaques of glistening metal, was but a poor imitation of the ineffable skill with which the unheeded crustaceans of the time protected every vulnerable portion of their bodies from the assaults and attacks of their submarine enemies. Gorget and visor and greaves and hauberk yield in perfection of fit and in absolute ease and freedom of action to the beautiful blue-black male of these rock-haunting paladins, or to the absolutely unassailable yet flexible corselets of the little burrowing South American armadillos.

It is interesting to notice, too, that just as in the case of the prickly plants and animals, so in the case of the armour-plated types, members of the most dissimilar and unrelated families, when circumstances happen to call for the development among them of mail-clad forms, produce on the whole extraordinarily analogous suits of panoply. They crop up everywhere. With the exception of the birds, which are never armour-plated (for one can hardly conceive of a flying ironclad), there is scarcely a single great group in the animal kingdom which does not number among its members one or more such cuirass-bearing species: and all the armoured types, from China to Peru, resemble one another in the most astonishing manner. It seems as if even nature could only find one central plan for coats of mail. Often, indeed, the resemblance is so close between unallied kinds that only a naturalist can perceive the deep underlying diversity in the midst of so much apparent similarity of external configuration. Just as a knight in armour and a horse in armour seem almost to belong to the same general group of articulated animals, so the armadillo absurdly resembles the tortoise, though one is a mammal and the other a reptile: while the similarity in type of the molluscan chiton (No. 12) to the common wood-louse (No. 5) is so close that it might deceive almost anyone but the scientific observer.

As a good introduction to the tactics of the plate-armoured class in general, I will begin with some brief account of the curious South African and Indian pangolins, or scaly ant-eaters. No. 1 exhibits a typical specimen of this quaint and belated race, the short-tailed pangolin, various modifications of which are found in most of the southern parts of the Dark Continent, from the West Coast and Mozambique to Zanzibar and Somaliland. The pangolins are also a good

set of armour-bearers to begin upon, because, curiously enough, they stand about half-way in military tactics between our old friends the prickly hedgehog group, whose armour is offensive, and the turtle group, whose armour is defensive only. As we shall see a little later, the pangolins (like the White Knight in "Alice," with his spiky armour) to some extent unite both these methods of passive warfare: they are turtles when unrolled, but turn into incomplete hedgehogs or porcupines if hard pressed by assailants.

A glance at the portrait of the short-tailed pangolin in No. 1 will show you at once that this uncouth beast is clad from head to tail in serried plates of defensive armour. He is about two feet long, and his head, I will admit, is remarkably small for his size: to say the truth, he does not possess much brains to speak of, being a fairly dull and unintelligent animal. Central and South Africa have never been famous for evoking the higher intellectual qualities: most native races there, whether of Hottentots or beasts, are tolerably stupid. And the pangolin is, so to speak, the Bushman among South African mammals. The great peculiarity of the race, the point that has told for them in the struggle for existence, in spite of their stupidity, is the thickness of their skin, or rather of their solid plate-like covering. This covering consists of large and sharp-edged scales, which overlap one another like the tiles on a house—another example of nature anticipating humanity, though to be sure in this case fishes had already anticipated pangolins. The origin and character of the scales is in itself one of the queerest points about this very queer and uncanny animal. They are composed of hairs, which have grown side by side and got gummed to one another, as it were, by an organic secretion: they are clotted curls, so to speak: in the very young cub, they are quite soft and light-coloured (like the prickles of new-born hedgehogs); but as the cub grows older, they become gradually harder and darker. In the full-grown pangolin they form a complete suit of jointed and plated armour, each plate being fastened at one end and free at the other, tile-wise, an arrangement which allows of great ease of movement. Part of the head, however, and the under portion of the body are comparatively unarmed: and this gives rise to the habit of rolling up, which we have already observed in the case of the hedgehog and other prickly animals.



1.—TILE-SHAPED PLATE-ARMOUR: THE PANGOLIN.

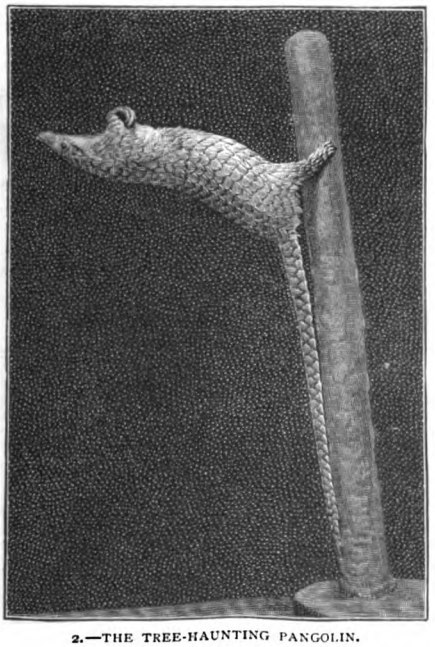
While the pangolin is walking, or rather shuffling along, for he is an ungraceful promenader, he is sufficiently protected from most enemies he is liable to meet on his nightly excursions — he is a nocturnal creature—by his scaly suit of impenetrable armour. But when any particularly persistent foe tries to investigate him too closely, or to attack his one exposed and vulnerable point, the head, then the pangolin grows angry and forthwith adopts the hedgehog tactics. He rolls himself round into a ball (for which his arched back is admirably adapted), tucks his snout between his legs in front, and covers it from behind with the scaly tail, which is similarly tucked under him: and in this safe position, a living sphere, he sticks out his sharp scales at right angles, thus offering their unpleasantly pointed edge to the tender nose of his astonished adversary. Further inquiry is thus instantly obviated.

The resemblance to the hedgehog in all this is so striking that one might at first sight inagine the two creatures were closely related to one another. But this is not the case. The likeness is a likeness of habit only. The hedgehog is an insectivore, while the pangolin belongs to a very ancient and almost extinct group of animals, the toothless mammals or edentates, once widely spread over the surface of the earth, but now surviving only in a few outlying and unprogressive countries. It is well known to zoologists that South Africa, South America, Southern India, and Australia are (so far as their types of life are concerned) very belated and antiquated regions: they are not up to date: the animals which inhabit them are of those slow-going kinds which once

roamed over Europe, Asia, North Africa, and North America, but which have been long since replaced in the go-ahead continents by much more advanced and business-like creatures. Sloths, wombats, armadillos, ant-eaters, are types of the older and slower sort; lions, tigers, deer, antelopes, monkeys, are types of the newer and more progressive fauna. Now, it is odd that out of the eight or ten species of pangolin known to men of science, half live in Central and Southern Africa, and the other half in India, Java, and Southern China. That is to say, they are scattered survivors of a kind once more widely spread, like the Finns and Lapps in Europe, the Eskimo in America, and the Samoyedes in Siberia, among human races.

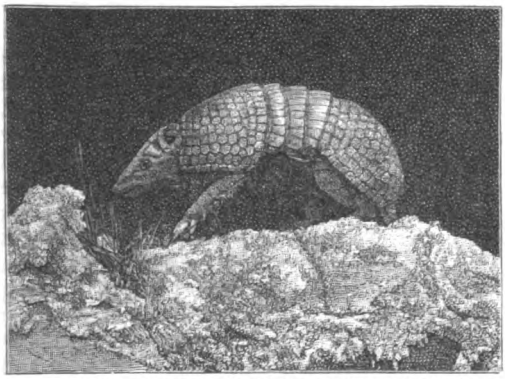
At the risk of saying too much about one group alone among my armour-plated series, too, I must just find room to add here that the pangolin's second name of scaly ant-eater sufficiently describes his mode of life and staple diet. The little beasts are burrowing animals, and they have a very peculiar, long, worm-like tongue, which they can dart out and retract with lightning rapidity. The tongue is also covered with a sticky glutinous secretion: and this secretion serves the pangolin in good stead in earning its daily bread, or rather its daily ants and termites. It is a curious sight to see them feeding. The animal makes an opening in the nests of the insects on which it preys, and darts out its extensible tongue into the galleries of the interior. The ants or termites rush out, as is their wont when disturbed, to repel the invader. They are then caught and entangled in the sticky secretion, like flies on treacle-paper; as soon as the pangolin has secured as many as will make a mouthful, he withdraws his tongue or trap, and swallows his haul with great gusto. For this reason he has no need of teeth: but he grinds up his food internally afterwards, in a sort of gizzard-like stomach, assisted (as in the case of many birds) by occasional pebbles which act as mill-stones.

You may also perhaps observe that the pangolin's fore-feet have very long curved nails or claws, looking as if his mother had carelessly neglected to cut them in early infancy. These claws are excellently adapted for burrowing, and also for breaking into the nests of white ants and other tropical insects; but, on the other hand, they are so much bent under (like a hoe or pick) that, when the animal walks, he has to shamble along ungracefully on what ought to be their upper surface. This, however, does not greatly matter, as the pangolin is an infrequent and unobtrusive walker: he is generally engaged on private business underground; when he emerges into the open, it is mostly by night, in search of ants; for, being a slow and tardy creature, he naturally obeys the antique precept, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard." He shuffles along as best he may from nest to nest on the plain, in an awkward, slipshod fashion: and since he doubles himself up when attacked by more powerful animals, the clumsiness of his pace does not seriously harm him. Indeed, you will find that almost all armour-clad or prickly creatures are slow of progress: being amply protected by their coat of mail or their suit of spiny quills, they have little need of the fleet foot of the hare or the slender limbs of the timid antelope.



2.—THE TREE-HAUNTING PANGOLIN.

A somewhat different type of pangolin, also from the Dark Continent, is represented in No. 2, which shows the portrait of the pale brown scaly ant-eater, a West African species. This creature, though it nests underground, is not so much a burrower as a tree-climber: its scales each end in three sharp points, which give it a little more of the hedgehog character. Oddly enough, it has also one very hedgehog-like trick, for it will roll itself up into a ball as it sits on the branch of a tree, and then fearlessly trundle itself over, trusting to the elasticity and

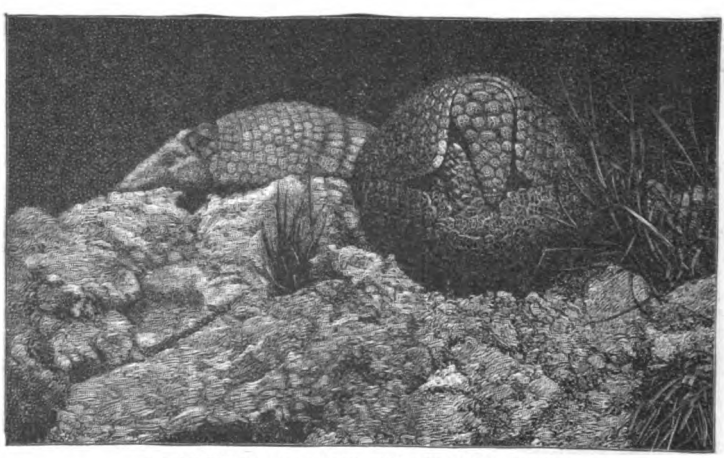


3.—SOLID CUIRASSES: THE THREE-BANDED ARMADILLO.

solidity of its scales to break the fall for it. The pangolins, as a whole, indeed, have been well compared to "an animated spruce-fir cone, furnished with a head and legs." Nothing could better describe their quaint appearance.

Now, if we run right across the southern hemisphere from Africa to South America, we shall find once more another curious group of armour-plated animals, belonging to the same great order as the scaly ant-eaters—the ancient and almost moribund order of edentates—and living like them upon ants and termites: but otherwise very different in many important points of structure. These are the comic little armadillos, a great many species of which are now known—odd-looking wee beasts whose general type is well exhibited by the photographic portrait of the three-banded armadillo in No. 3. This portrait, together with several others in the present article, has been taken from the excellent specimen in the British Museum, and I desire here to express my thanks to the authorities at South Kensington for the kind way in which they have permitted Mr. Enock and myself to overhaul and pose their treasures. But the oddest point of difference between the armadillos and the pangolins is the nature of their covering: in the pangolins, the plates of the armour are horny in texture, and consist of united or agglutinated hairs; in the armadillo they are bony, being composed of bone-material deposited in the true skin in the shape of little shields, though each such shield is also itself once more inclosed or overlaid by a horny plate, developed in the epidermis or outer scurf-skin. In the particular instance I have chosen for our illustration—that of the quaint and dainty little three-banded armadillo—the coat of armour consists of several distinct portions. First, there is the cuirass or shoulder-shield, a sort of solid cape, within which the head and fore legs can be completely withdrawn. Then there is the jointed central part, consisting of the three movable bands from which the animal takes its Christian name, so to speak, being distinguished from the rest of the armadillo family in general as the three-banded armadillo: this central part is girt in rows of plates with movable skin between them, and is extraordinarily flexible and easy in its movements, the parts gliding beneath one another in the most admirable and workmanlike manner. Then comes the hind shield or body-armour, a sort of mantle for the flanks, with a notch in it to receive the tail; and this part serves to protect the hind legs as well as the whole of the back and digestive apparatus. Finally, a smaller set of plates protects the forehead and face, while another set covers the tail: so that only the under surface of the body is at any time exposed to the attacks of enemies.

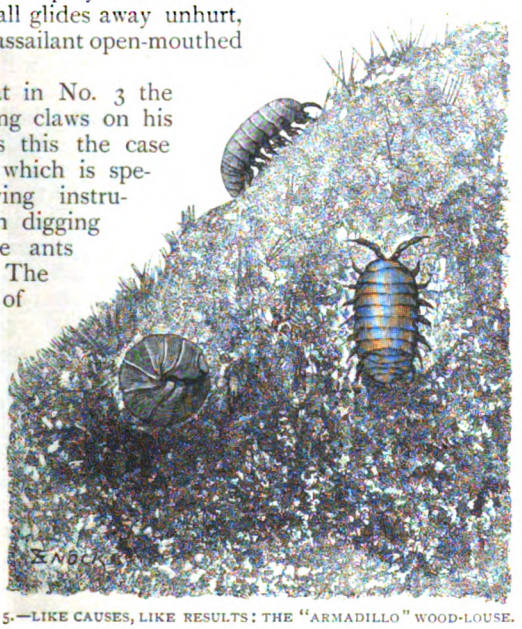
That is how the armadillo looks when it is abroad on its hunting expeditions and fears no foe: but let danger threaten, and, quick as thought, the little beast immediately clears the decks for action, as you see in No. 4, where it is shown preparing to receive cavalry.



4.—AN ENEMY THREATENS: THE ARMADILLO RETIRES.

A dog or other inquisitive assailant has manifested a desire to investigate the armadillo: the armadillo wisely declines to be examined, and prefers to retire into the privacy of its internal consciousness. By a strong muscular contraction, it folds itself up bodily: the head and fore legs retreat behind the cuirass or cape; the hind legs tuck themselves away neatly in the recess of the body-shield; and the armour-plated upper surface of the forehead and tail fill in the interspaces of the notched coat of mail, lying side by side in the crevice and completing the general globular form of the new position. When thus rolled up into a perfect globe, the armadillo is even better protected from attack than the hedgehog: for if a beast of prey tries to bite it, the smooth living ball glides away unhurt, and leaves the baffled assailant open-mouthed and wondering.

You will notice that in No. 3 the armadillo has very long claws on his fore-feet: especially is this the case with the middle toe, which is specialized as a burrowing instrument, and is useful in digging up the nests of white ants and other insects. The armadillos pass most of their life underground, and seldom venture out except in search of food or mates. But they are not for the most part nocturnal. All the existing kinds are comparatively small — none of them longer than 3ft.—but many of their cousins in late geological times were much more formidable in size, and must have looked like gigantic turtles. An extinct species, known to science as the glyptodon, measured no less than eleven feet in length; while a still more closely-related type, the chlamydothere (I am not responsible for these very learned words), was almost as formidable as its own name, for it rivalled in bulk our modern rhinoceroses. Such colossal creatures, clad in plate-armour to match, must have moved about like living terrestrial ironclads, and are sure to have been better respected than loved by most of their contemporaries.



5.—LIKE CAUSES, LIKE RESULTS: THE "ARMADILLO" WOOD-LOUSE.

It is to descend from the sublime to the ridiculous, I admit, to go straight from these huge South American fossil monsetrs to the common little wood-louse of our English copses (No. 5). Yet the resemblance of habit in that lurker under stones to the burrowing beasts of the Argentine Pampas is so great that many prim speakers, disliking the strong Saxon flavour of its good old English name, habitually speak of our British wood-louse as "the armadillo"; even science itself has sanctioned the usage in the slightly altered form of *armadillidium*. If you lift up a fallen log or mossy boulder in almost any English grove, it is ten to one that you will find crouched beneath it a curious little many-legged running beast, very smooth and shiny, who tries to avoid the light, and scampers away the moment the wood or stone which forms the roof is removed from his underground dwelling. Touch him with your finger, and he doubles himself up instantly into a shiny ball, as you see in No. 5, being then protected from harm by his tough shell or armour-plated carapace. So smooth and round is he, indeed, that he rolls away from your grasp, like a glazed pill, and can hardly be picked up save with a little care. He is not an insect. The wood-lice are land-haunting crustaceans, remote relations of the crab and lobster, marine creatures which have stepped boldly on shore and adapted themselves to the habit of breathing air, though they still live in moist holes or crannies, among dark damp spots, hiding through the day, and prowling forth in search of food at night-time. They are vegetarians by conviction and habit, and live mainly on dead leaves, though they have also a decided fondness for living lettuces. But the curious thing about these little beasts is that, though they are crustaceans by descent, utterly unrelated, of course, to the armadillo or any other mammal, they have

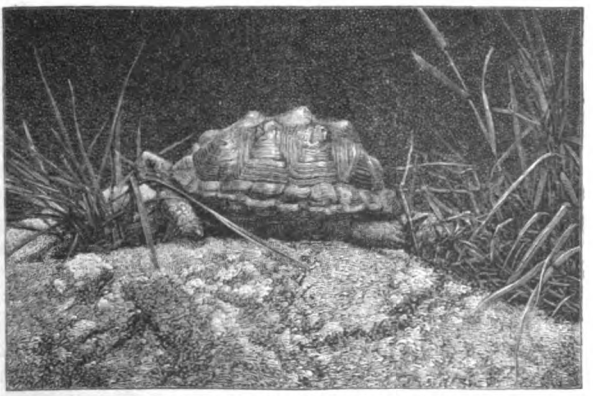
independently developed an almost identical mode of defence, and have learnt to tuck away their head and tail, and their many pairs of legs, within their smooth globular armour exactly in the same fashion as their South American prototype tucks his own belongings away within his bony cuirass. Even the muscular machinery for rolling and unrolling the body and shell is absurdly similar in the larger beasts and the small ones. Many other examples of such globular armour-plated animals occur in various groups of lower types; but I leave them to the ingenuity of the reader to discover.

Perhaps the most marvellous, however, of all the mail-coated animals are our good old friends, the common tortoises and turtles. We have been so long familiar with their shape, and with their extraordinary tunic of bone and horn, that we have long ago ceased even to wonder at them; but if we were shown a tortoise for the first time, and saw him withdraw his head and legs at a touch within the shelter of his shell, we should all exclaim, "What a surprising creature!" In order to understand the origin of the very complete defensive armour in the turtle group, we ought first to consider the bucklers and hauberks of the crocodiles and alligators, which, though much less perfect, lead up to and explain the turtle's panoply.

Crocodiles are, in essence, very big lizards, though they differ technically from the true lizards in some important points, but resemble them in outer shape and in most anatomical peculiarities. But their chief and best-marked external feature is their loose coat of movable scaly mail, which stands to the solid, welded shell of the turtles much as the old linked chain-armour of the Norman conquerors stood to the developed plate-armour of the later Plantagenet period. Crocodiles have their backs, tails, and the under side of their bodies amply defended by square horny shields, which move freely against one another at the edges. In the more vulnerable parts, such as the back, however, the wily crocodile does not trust to the strength of these horny plates alone: he has developed beneath them a similar series of stout bony plaques, each of which is neatly and deftly jointed at the edge with the ones beside it. So perfect a safeguard in its own fashion is this double set of armour, horny and bony, that sportsmen will tell you the only sure way to kill a crocodile is to hit him in the eye: that is his one vulnerable spot, his heel of Achilles: everywhere else, a bullet glides off him harmlessly. He lolls in the water unconcerned and winks at his assailant.

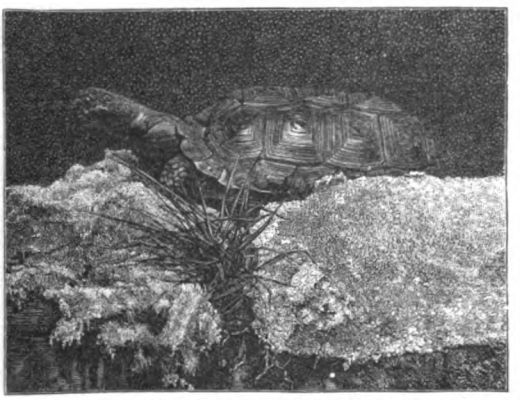
Now, the turtle group are descendants, apparently, of some ancient ancestor who possessed a coat of movable armour extremely like the plated suit of the existing crocodiles and alligators. I venture to believe, even, that crocodiles and turtles are remote offshoots of the same original lizard-like stock, which has variously specialized itself for various walks of life under different conditions. All turtles and tortoises possess what we call in common language a shell, though science—which always loves long words—prefers to describe it as a carapace. The shell is bony, and in almost all instances is actually welded together into one with the backbone and ribs, so as to form a single immovable dome-shaped suit of armour. If you look inside the dead shell, you will see the vertebræ like a chain running down the middle. There are usually two shells, one covering the upper part of the body and one the lower: and in many species of tortoise—for their name is Legion, the family being a very large one—the head and legs can be entirely withdrawn within the margin of the carapace. In such cases, just as in that of the armadillo, the gaps in the armour are neatly filled up, for the exposed parts are covered on purpose with horny masks or aprons, which thus complete and round off the entire defensive mechanism. The bony dome itself is also covered with a skin or breastwork of horny shields, which form the externally visible portion of the shell, and are most interesting objects for examination, because they exhibit the origin and development of the whole suit of armour. For the visible horny shell consists in most species of quite distinct and unwelded plates, much as in the crocodile, only that they are not separately movable: while the true bony shell beneath them consists, on the contrary, of a single welded or united piece, which, however, when one comes to look at it closely, turns out to be compound—shows by its lines and channels that it was originally composed of distinct plates, like those of alligators. Thus the turtles preserve for us in their own bodies an epitomized history of the course of their development.

I have selected for illustration here three species only among the many hundred kinds of the tortoise group now known to naturalists, in order to exhibit three successive stages in the gradual obliteration of the separate plates. No. 6 represents a land-tortoise from South Africa, in which the

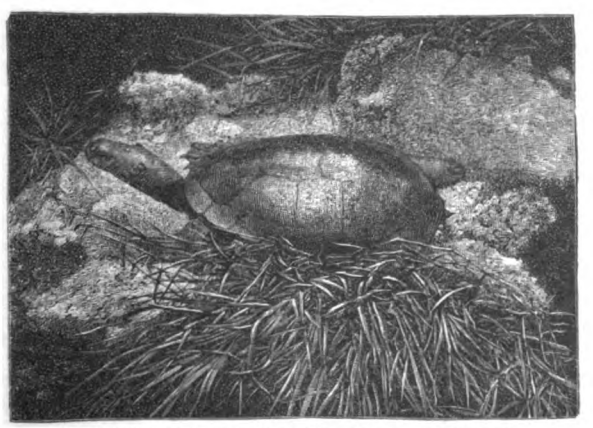


6.—A SOUTH AFRICAN TORTOISE WITH DISTINCT SCALES.

plates are still almost as distinct as on a crocodile's back, though, of course, not movable. This is a very pretty dappled species, and the sculpture in relief on the separate shields or bosses which make up the shell is extremely elegant. No. 7, on the other hand, is a tortoise from the Argentine: it displays much more flattened and obliterated shields, which have coalesced more perfectly, and do not nearly so well recall the original crocodile or alligator type. No. 8, again, is a good example of the basking mud-tortoises, in which the separateness of the plates has almost disappeared, so that the entire shell, both bony and horny, has practically coalesced into a single smooth and rounded dome. The particular specimen here figured comes from Port Essington (in these days of Imperial extension, I will be cosmopolitan at all hazards): but other mud-turtles, similar in this respect, are found in shallow waters almost all the world over. We have in these cases a little bit of the history of evolution among animals served up for us in detail: indeed, if you will go to the Natural History Museum at South Kensington and look carefully at all the crocodiles, alligators, tortoises, and turtles there on view — an endless group—you will soon come to the conclusion that here at least there are no "missing links," but that every stage in the long, slow evolution of the tortoise's shell from the separate alligator-like scales of its lizard ancestor has been fully preserved for us. Incidentally such a visit will also serve to suggest the unspeakable variety and diversity of nature: before you examine the cases in the reptile room, you will probably imagine that a few dozen types of crocodile and turtle are all that exist: after you have compared them in full, you will come away astonished at the number, the strangeness, and the exquisite adaptation of the many kinds displayed for you—which after all form but a portion of those existing in nature.



7.—A SOUTH AMERICAN TORTOISE: THE SCALES COALESCING.



8.—A MUD-TORTOISE: THE SCALES ALMOST OBLITERATED.

Let me give one probably unexpected

instance of this curious adaptation to local conditions. The tortoises with humpy and bossy scales, more or less quaintly coloured (like the first here figured), are very conspicuous in museums: but in nature they are often quite hard to distinguish from their natural surroundings, even where they are plentiful and basking in the open: for they usually frequent rocky and pebbly spots, or else jungles of dry grass: and their humps and colours harmonize excellently with the shapes and hues of the objects about them. On the other hand, the smoothest forms are generally mud-tortoises, which sun themselves at their ease on logs in the water, or else lurk among soft mud, and under these circumstances their smoothness makes them less conspicuous to the few enemies whom even their solid coats do not enable them to set at defiance.

All the suits of armour with which I have hitherto been dealing are quite permanent: they cannot be taken off and put on again as readily as a mediæval knight-errant's casque and brigandine: indeed, since the turtle's coat and his backbone are, like the French Republic, "one and indivisible," he could no more divest himself of it with safety than you or I could change our skeletons, or get a new skull to suit the fashion. But the next suit of armour of which I am going to speak has that further peculiarity that it is shed by its owner at periodical intervals—I mean the lobster's. Everybody knows, of course, that lobsters moult as much as canaries. They begin life as tiny tadpoles or larvæ, about half an inch long, in which stage they have grotesquely big goggle eyes, like the dwarf in a pantomime, and swim about freely on the surface of the water. You would never take them for lobsters at all at this point in their history: they have much more resemblance to the uncouth larvæ of beetles and mosquitoes than to their own demure and sedate parents. After several moults, however, and several perplexing alterations of form, like so many crustacean "quick-change artists," they arrive at last at the adult lobster condition. Adult, I say, because they have now attained their final form: but not full grown: they go on growing: and as the shell they wear fits them tightly all over, and is composed of a single piece, though much jointed, they have no alternative but to cast it off bodily from time to time, and develop a new one. When the lobster is still very young, he does this at frequent intervals: in middle life, he does it once a year: but when he has grown old and thoroughly hardened, he changes his suit a good deal less frequently. At the moulting period he retires for a time into private life, and changes his suit, like a gentleman that he is, in a sequestered dressing-room, far from observers.

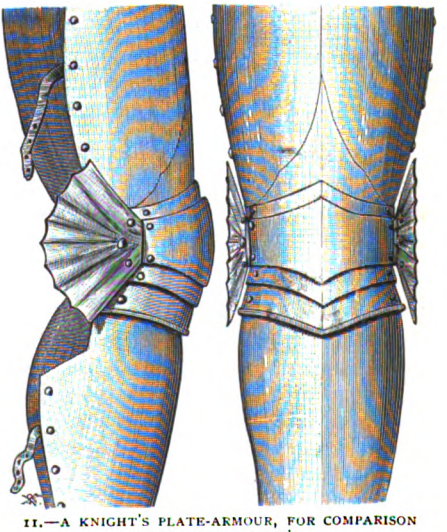
Oddly enough, however, he grows *before*, not *after*, he casts his shell. That is to say, he lays by material for new cells and tissues inside his old coat, but he does not plim them out, so to speak—does not inflate them, if I may use a metaphor which will be clear to all cyclists. The raw stuff is there, but not the mere filling. At last, when he has got everything ready for the eventful change, he proceeds to endue himself in his new suit of armour. An entire soft shell grows round his limbs within the old hard one; then the lobster withdraws himself, leg by leg, claw by claw, and swimmeret by swimmeret, from his disused coat, and steps out of his skin, a brand-new creature. Even the hard bits of the interior—the shelly walls at the base of the small legs—are shed w th the rest; for the whole suit hangs together in one piece, the inner parts being, in reality, mere folds of the skin, doubled inward. The cast skeleton, when he has wriggled out of it, forms a perfect model of a lobster, in fact, and looks like a whole beast, till you discover that it is empty. The real lobster himself, on the other hand, after thus shuffling off his mortal coil, emerges upon the world a new and defenceless fleshy creature. It must feel odd for him to find himself suddenly deprived of his wonted mail. For in order to withdraw his big claws from the shed skeleton, and otherwise disengage himself from the suit he has outgrown, he has to become as soft as a jelly: in which condition he pulls his limbs one by one through the narrow chink of the huge pincer-like claws in the most incredible fashion. As soon as the moult is complete, however, he begins to grow, or apparently grow, within the new and swelling skin, at a rate which might well astonish anybody but a mushroom. He absorbs water through the thin, jelly-like shell, and with it inflates the animal tissues; for before he takes off his old coat he has made himself a new one, perfect from head to tail, and waiting only to be hardened by a supply of lime, partly laid up in his body beforehand, and partly eaten for the purpose in the shape of other shells, which he greedily devours and digests in bulk at this stage of his existence. In a few days the new shell has acquired the consistency of a leathern jerkin, and by the

end of six weeks has once more become a perfect suit of solid plate-armour.

Our own common lobster is, perhaps, the finest example now living on earth of the mail-coated animals: for he is a soldier and a member of a dominant type, like the mediæval barons in their iron panoply; not a mere defensively-armed non-combatant, like the armadillo and the tortoise, which skulk and hide themselves. Shielded by his impenetrable corselet of stony armour, provided with huge pinching claws which can crush a sea-shell like so much paper, and capable of attacking almost any foe he meets in his own element, your lobster is a magnate of the most ancient order. My illustration, No. 9, however, represents not this hidalgo of the seas, but a cousin of the family of somewhat inferior rank—the spiny lobster or sea-crayfish—who unites in his own person to a certain extent the tactics of the tortoise with those of the hedgehog. He is half armadillo, half porcupine in his mode of defence. His body is covered by a stout corselet like that of the common lobster, but instead of being smooth it is prickly or thorny like the shell of the Japanese devil-crab, whom I had the honour of presenting to my readers in this Magazine on a previous occasion. And the reason why the spiny lobster needs this extra protection of spikes on his shell is pretty clear when you come to examine him closely. He has no great crushing nut-cracker claws like the powerful vices of the common lobster: his first pair of legs are scarcely bigger or more muscular than the others: as a man of war, he is not to be compared for a moment to his more familiar and highly developed relation. Therefore he makes up for it by spines on his back: he doubles the parts, as it were, of armadillo and hedgehog, so as to be safe either way. We have a spiny lobster of this type in our own British seas; but in

9.—THE SPINY LOBSTER, BOTH ARMOUR-PLATED AND PRICKLY.

10.—THE SPINY LOBSTER'S TAIL, TO SHOW ARRANGEMENT OF PLATES.



11.—A KNIGHT'S PLATE-ARMOUR, FOR COMPARISON WITH THE LOBSTER'S.

order to meet the views of Colonial readers—for THE STRAND MAGAZINE goes round the world—Mr. Enock has here selected for illustration its New Zealand representative.

No. 10 is an enlarged view of this sea-crayfish's tail, intended to show its very close analogy to the joints of plate-armour exhibited in No. 11. The resemblance is one of the best examples one could choose of the very close fashion in which art half unconsciously imitates nature, or nature half unconsciously foreshadows art. Compare it once more with the pangolin's tail and the armadillo's belts, and you will further observe how much nature also imitates and anticipates herself—how the same device to obtain the same result appears over and over again through all her handiwork.

The self-same lesson is very beautifully impressed upon us by the curious little marine creature delineated in No. 12. What is he? you wonder. Well, you know that most molluscs have either two valve-like shells, familiar to everybody in the oyster, the mussel, the cockle, and the scallop—I choose examples whose nearness to "the great heart of the people" makes them sure of recognition—or else a single more or less spiral shell, as in the equally well-known cases of the whelk, the periwinkle, the garden snail, and the limpet. But you would hardly suspect this odd-looking creature, like a lobster's tail with the body omitted, of being also a mollusc. Nevertheless, it is one. Its name is chiton: and chiton is good Greek for a cloak or robe. The quaint beast in question derives his title from the eight flexible shell-plates which cover his back with a complete suit of armour, exactly analogous to so many which we have already examined. A few species of chiton inhabit our British seas: but it will give once more a faint idea of the vast variety of all these strange types if I add that, taking the round world over, more than four hundred distinct kinds of these jointed molluscs have been described by naturalists.

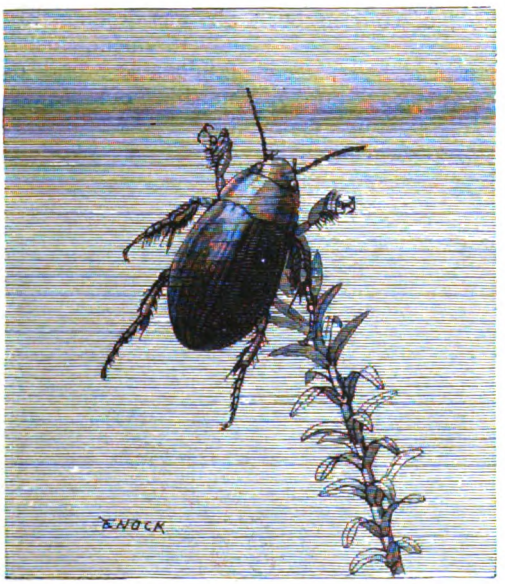
12.—A JOINTED AND ARMOURED MOLLUSC, THE CHITON.

I have chosen only a few among the larger or more conspicuous members of the great group of armour-plated animals, but many of them occur in other classes—too many for me even to enumerate roughly. Sometimes a whole vast alliance is armour-plated almost without exception—for example, the molluscs. The enormous majority of these are inclosed in very hard shells, like the oyster and cockle, sometimes reaching the size of the huge conch or giant clam, with three great tooth-like furrows, which is occasionally used as a receptacle for fountains, or as a font or holy-water basin in Continental churches. The big univalves so often found as ornaments of cottage cabinets show one equal hardness: and in many cases the mouth of the shell, the only exposed part, is closed by a solid door, known as an operculum, which the animal pulls in behind it, and keeps in place by means of a powerful muscle. In not a few instances, the hedgehog principle reinforces the turtle one: the shells are covered with hard spines or prickles. Some few molluscs, however, like the slugs, have found it pay to get rid of their shells: and here it is curious to note a singular analogy with the gradual discarding of armour by human soldiers after the invention of fire-arms. For when the heavy plate-armour was superseded as a whole, the helmet and breast-plate, covering the most vulnerable and important parts, the head and heart, were still for a time retained, as by Cromwell's Ironsides. Now, just the same thing occurs in the transition from snails to slugs. True snails can retire altogether within their protective shells: intermediate types occur which have shells a little too small for them, so that they cannot hide in them: then come imperfect slugs, with small, shield-like shells carried on their backs—mere bucklers, just covering the heart and most vital organs: after that, we get slugs who have no visible external shell at all, but possess a hidden breast-plate under the "mantle" or flesh of the body, exactly as Cromwell himself is said to have worn concealed armour under his woollen jacket: and, last of all, as in the big black slug, we find forms with no shell of any sort, open or buried, but at best only an imperfect relic in the shape of a few formless fragments of lime

scattered about in the flesh of the mantle. Here, once more, as in the turtles, the various steps in the evolutionary history of a type have been fully preserved for us.

The greater number of crustaceans, again, such as crabs and prawns, are also armour-plated, the armour being, of course, proportioned in thickness, as a rule, to the size of the animal. The great edible crab of our own coasts, too well known on the supper-table to call for illustration, is a most formidable beast, protected alike by his solid carapace and by the muscular strength of his powerful crushing claws, weapons hardly second to those of our friend the lobster. Among insects, too, there are several great groups of armour-plated kinds; for example, the beetles. The common stag-beetle of our own country is a fine instance of a mailed type: some tropical kinds have shells as hard and as impenetrable as the crab's: many of them are also provided in addition with offensive weapons of no mean description. No. 13 exhibits a simple typical case of a mailed water-beetle. The scorpions form another stout armoured class, with pincer claws as strong as those of the crabs and lobsters. I need enumerate no more; I must resist the temptation to describe at length the bony-pike of America, a true fish inclosed from head to tail in a complete and close-fitting mail of lozenge-shaped scales, enamelled and slimy, like a glistening suit of silvery armour; or the ungainly sturgeons, with their rows of bony plates protecting the sides; or that quaint creature the coffer-fish, like a living carved-ivory box, incased in a hard setting of six-sided plates, which form a curious mosaic pattern over its entire body. But I must draw a line somewhere.

I will only suggest before I conclude that a good subject for a day's stroll through the Natural History Museum at South Kensington or any other great collection of zoological specimens would be the examination and comparison of all such armoured creatures. Such a study would show, not only the similarity of the means employed for defence in various cases, but also the beautiful variety of ways in which the general plan of armour-plating is adapted in each instance to the particular needs of the different kinds, crawling, swimming, or walking, marine or terrestrial, powerful or feeble, provided with offensive arms or dependent wholly on their defensive covering.



13.—A MAILED WATER-BEETLE.

Monsieur Bibi's Boom-Boom.

By H. J. W. Dam.

THE sun burned hot on the Channel. It was a warm morning in June. The yachts at anchor off St. Milicent's-on-Sea were like snowy carvings set in green and dancing diamonds.

Monsieur Bibi stepped from the perfect dining-room of his perfect new hotel upon the cool green lawn, where the breakfast-tables were set under the blue and white striped awning. Monsieur Bibi was a broad, short, and very stout Alsatian, with a big, waxed moustache like the third Napoleon's, and large, projecting, melancholy eyes like a pug dog's. He was immaculately dressed in a black frock-coat, an expansive white waistcoat which increased his abdominal rotundity, and a Piccadilly scarf with a diamond pin. He wore other things too, of course; but these do not matter.

He frowned at a fly which had placed itself on a menu without the cook's order. The fly flew. Monsieur Bibi pounced upon a breakfast-roll which had not been properly browned on top, and gave it to a waiter. He seized the waiter's white necktie, which was a sixteenth of an inch off the centre, and centred it. "Eh? Vot I pay you for? Eh?" said he, rebuking.

Then Monsieur Bibi, alone, sighed heavily — a deep-drawn, fat man's sigh. He had sunk all his fortune in this perfect hotel, which had just been opened. His running expenses were very heavy, and the public did not come. It had been open for a week, had been well advertised, and there were only three guests. Ruin stared him in the face. He came sadly over to our table.

"Vot I need is a great advertisement, a sensation, a boom-boom. Dat is de American word, is it not?"

We explained that the word "boom" in America, being highly valued, was used only once at a time.

"Truly!" said he. "I 'ave 'ad de idea dat it was 'boom-boom,' from de big drum." Then he sighed again, and looked sadly out to sea. We were sorry for him, for Monsieur Bibi, though a genius at making out a bill, was a man of feelings and a cook of eminence, which means an artist of soul.

And at that exact moment Monsieur Bibi's boom-boom stepped out through the French windows of the dining-room, and sat down at her table under the awning. She was destined to give him an enormous advertisement, focus the eyes of all the fashionable world on his hotel, and bring warships, officials, and diplomatists galore to St. Milicent's. But Monsieur Bibi did not know this. So he merely bowed profoundly

"MONSIEUR BIBI'S BOOM-BOOM STEPPED OUT."

to the lady—his hand upon his heart and a look of professional admiration in his pug-dog eyes—and majestically summoned her waiter.

Though registered at the hotel as "Mrs. Craven of Paris," she looked like an unmarried girl of twenty. She was tall, slender, and well formed, with wonderful Titian-red hair, parted on the left side. This, with her large black eyes, gave her a strange and fascinating personality. She was simply dressed in a white serge skirt and pale blue silk blouse. Her belt was of white satin, and was fastened by a large buckle of what seemed at first sight to be imitation diamonds. An errant sunbeam caught them, however, and the sparkling flash revealed that they were real stones, and very costly. The most singular thing about her, however, was her manner. This was cool, careless, and imperial. She seemed to be perfectly able to take care of herself under any and all circumstances, and her decision of character showed even in such trifles as opening and shutting her purse, ordering her breakfast, and nodding in acknowledgment of Monsieur Bibi's salutation.

"De manager of de Queen's Crescent Hotel in London writes me dat she is a 'owling swell—incognita,'" he whispered. "Russian," he added, under his breath.

It shortly appeared, in fact, that "the lady of the ground-floor right" was a very great mystery indeed. She wrote and received no letters, and saw no one but her maid; but she sent and received telegrams in sheaves. They kept the porters and waiters constantly on the run. Monsieur Bibi's curiosity was great, but it was baffled. A few of the telegrams were in French and in cipher; the rest in Russian. Monsieur Bibi, to relieve his mind, gave us periodical bulletins concerning her.

"Wot you t'ink?" he said. "She wants to drive, and will drive not'ing but a coach and four. And didn't she drive dem! Mon Dieu!"

The next day it was: "Vot you t'ink? She tells me to order her a private mass at de Catholic church, and pays a hundred pounds. Mon Dieu! I vould have got it up in de hotel for half."

On Friday morning, when the London papers arrived, Monsieur Bibi's close-cut, coarse black hair stood straight on end with amazement. He read in the *Telegraph*:—

SENSATION IN ST. PETERSBURG.

It has just leaked out that a great sensation was caused in the Court circle ten days ago by the sudden and mysterious disappearance of Princess Wanda Souvaroff. This beautiful girl, a reigning belle, was betrothed to the Grand Duke Stanislas, who is some twenty-three years her senior. The marriage was arranged, it is said, on political lines, by her father, Admiral Prince Souvaroff, and is specially favoured by the Czar, who will make Admiral Souvaroff the head of the Marine. At the ball given by the Grand Duke in honour of the betrothal Princess Wanda disappeared, leaving absolutely no trace of her whereabouts. Report has it that a love story is behind the mystery, and this gains currency from the fact that a handsome young Polish officer, a captain in the Imperial Guard, has obtained leave of absence, and has also disappeared. His name is Ladislas Borowski, and his family is the richest in Poland.

"Holy Saint Dominique," gasped Monsieur Bibi. "It is de Princesse Wanda. My boom-boom was under my nose, and I did not smell it."

As he stood there transfixed the lady of the ground-floor right walked out to him. "Monsieur," she said, "I leave by the *Celt* to-morrow for South Africa. You will have a special steamer to take me to Southampton ready at the pier at ten o'clock to-morrow morning."

Monsieur Bibi's heart turned cold. His great opportunity had come only to vanish like a mocking will-o'-the-wisp. He said, faintly, "Oui, madame." She went away, and he staggered to a garden chair, and mopped his bald-topped brow with a red-figured silk handkerchief.

"Angelic Saint Dominique! It is too exceedingly cruel. It is anguishing." But, instead of weeping, his face soon set itself in firm determination. He rose like the great man that he was to the strategic demand. Fifteen minutes later he was in the cabin of a long, narrow, black excursion steamer, the *Swift*. He was saying excitedly to the captain, "You onderstand? I pay you twenty-five pounds to Southampton. Dat is de agreement. Bot I pay you feefty pounds if you miss de liner. Dat is between you an' me."

"You are the one to give the orders," said the captain.

"You can crack you cylinder-head, snap you crank-shaft, bust you b'iler; I don't care wot you do, bot don't catch de liner," said Monsieur Bibi, wildly.

"I won't," said the captain. He thought Monsieur Bibi was mad, but the bank-notes were perfectly sane.

At half-past one next day, when the *Swift*, bearing the Princess, her luggage, and Bibi, ran into Southampton, the *Celt* was represented by a faded track of foam upon the waters and a column of smoke on the horizon. A tall, dark, handsome young man

sat, dejected, on the jetty. Monsieur Bibi was the first to see him. "Ah!" said he, in beatific calm, "my boom-boom has not departed. It is probablement de pride of de Borowskis."

Princess Wanda, who was in a state of blank despair over missing the steamer, gavè a scream of joy on seeing her lover. She sprang to her feet, her eyes dilated and her face radiant. "Ladislas, Ladislas!" she cried. Ladislas did not answer, because he was several hundred yards away, and did not hear her. She waved her sun-shade wildly, and called his name again. Then love or sound or the swift-flying steamer impressed him, and he saw. He sprang to his feet, cried out something in unintelligible joy, and waved a brown bag frantically. There is nothing so ridiculous as a man on a wharf in love with a woman on a steamer. But Ladislas was handsome, and the woman on the steamer is not critical as a rule.

As the *Swift* approached the jetty their two faces were a study. Their eyes were full of love, joy, and tears. He sprang over the rail, seized the Princess, and kissed her passionately, cheeks, eyes, and mouth. Tell it not in Gath, but she threw her arms around his neck and kissed him no less. These Russians love, in some respects, as people ought to love, and high-born St. Petersburg girls are generally held to be more impulsive than logical.

"Lofe rules de Court, de camp, de grove," said Monsieur Bibi, with happy eyes and radiant face. "De boom-boom is beginning. He shall have fifteen, sixteen, and bath."

The meeting was really touching. Princess Wanda, somewhat calmer, laughed, cried, and laughed by turns. She was radiantly happy. The young man was pale with joy.

"How beautiful is de outpouring of pure first lofe," said Monsieur Bibi. "Heaven bless dem! Dey must vait two veeks more, fifty guineas per each."

The lovers sat hand in hand on deck all the way back to St. Milicent's. When they arrived there Monsieur Bibi filled fifteen, sixteen, and bath, his largest and most expensive rooms. She whispered that the rooms must be dressed with fresh flowers daily, like hers.

"How exquisite is de floral symbolism off our highest and tenderest feelings! Von guinea per room per daily," said Monsieur Bibi. No flowers were too good for Ladislas.

But now it appeared that the nesting doves were in a terrible plight. They could not get married. A registrar's license required a two weeks' residence. A special license they could not obtain, not being members of the English Church. The Greek Church authorities in London had refused all Wanda's petitions to marry her and Ladislas because they suspected something wrong, and Wanda dared not reveal herself. Monsieur Bibi, consulted, gave his best opinion as in favour of two weeks' residence and marriage by registrar.

"But we shall be found, arrested, separated," said Wanda.

"An Englishman's 'ouse is my castle," said Monsieur Bibi. "Dis house is licensed to me for dancing, music, and honeymoons. I am efen a jobmaster," he added, proudly.

This was not very clear, but it gave Wanda some courage. They concluded to wait.

The next day a tall, stalwart, jolly-looking fellow, in a brown wideawake hat and tweeds, arrived. He had a curling black moustache and a pink necktie, and spoke Berlin German. Monsieur Bibi's experienced eyes examined him.

"MONSIEUR BIBI'S EXPERIENCED EYES EXAMINED HIM."

"He is a Russian spy," he said. "On de track of de lofers. Votever I charge him, he will charge de bureau double."

"I want a room," said the man.

"De Russian secret service is de admiration of de vorld," said Monsieur Bibi. "De baby boom-boom has begun to take its nourishment. He shall have sixty-one, sixty-two, and bath."

The spy knew his business. He shadowed the lovers, and set the wires humming to London and St. Petersburg.

Monsieur Bibi knew *his* business. He was also a man of gallant sentiments. He went to the lovers. He found them sitting in the soft calm of the June twilight, drinking in the beauty of the night and the exquisite presence of each other.

There were tears in his sad, puggy eyes. "The gracious lady will pardon me, but you should be warned."

"Warned?"

"It is a Russian spy: sixty-one, sixty-two, and bath," he added, mechanically.

"A spy here? In this hotel?"

"Pardon me. Your story is known. It is even in de English newspapers. Dey print not'ings until everybody knows it. It is de custom of de country."

"Good heavens! Help us! What shall we do?"

"You vant a solicitor. De best in London, vit his clerk."

"Then get them. Quick. Telegraph."

He did so. "Poor babies!" said he. "It shall never be said dat lovers have not a friend in Bibi. De solicitor shall have forty-two, forty-three, and bath. His clerk shall have forty-four, forty-five, and bath. Solicitors' clerks don't take baths, but he might risk it down here if it was all paid for."

The solicitor and his clerk arrived that evening. They went to Wanda's sitting-room, and talked long and earnestly. Finally Wanda came out excitedly.

"I want the Russian Ambassador. He is my uncle."

Monsieur Bibi bowed, and ordered the Russian Ambassador by telegraph as calmly as if he had been serving *Russian Ambassador au vin blanc* on the *carte du jour*. Then he went to his office, intoxicated with delight.

"An Ambassador. Heavens! My poor hotel will be honoured," he said. He chuckled, rubbed his waistcoat, then sang an opera phrase in a spasm of joy. "My hotel will be famous!" Then he commenced to caper and bob about the room in an inconceivable manner. He could not contain himself. He was dancing a breakdown. Eugene, the head waiter, came in, and stared curiously at him like a scientist upon seeing a familiar bug in a new and strange aspect.

"Go 'vay," said Monsieur Bibi. "I am under de storm and stress of strong emotion." Eugene went.

"De Russian Ambassador shall have de whole top-floor left, completely inclosed, vit fine view of de sea. If he don't sleep vit his wife, vich isn't likely, she shall have de whole top-floor right, completely inclosed, vit fine view of de sea!"

They came. The Russian Ambassador was a grave man with grey side-whiskers. His wife was a handsome, majestic woman, perfectly dressed. They saw Wanda. They declined to see Ladislas. There were more consultations.

These went on from day to night. Love and political ambition were at deadly odds. Wanda had insulted the Grand Duke, angered the Czar, injured her father, and made things very unpleasant for her uncle the Ambassador. But Wanda was immovable. She would marry Ladislas or nobody. She hated the Grand Duke's teeth. She also hated the Grand Duke. She would run away again, and never marry anybody as long as she lived if Ladislas went with her.

The lovers were now separated. Ladislas roamed the corridors gnawing his moustache in fear and gloom. Their fever vented itself in ardent epistles and heavy bribes. Monsieur Bibi was postmaster. Both his heart and his pocket were full.

"I vould really like to be Postmaster-Cheneral and make all de stamps myself," said he. "Vouldn't I make pretty ones," he added, winking at the lift.

The time was now ripe, and as it could do no harm, Monsieur Bibi told the newspapers. They used their blackest type, and sighed for American headlines. "The Missing Russian Princess at the Hotel Savarin, St. Milicent's," was Monsieur Bibi's stipulation. This was faithfully fulfilled. It appeared in all. The public now found the hotel, and began to come. The correspondents came first.

"Information only to dose who stop here," said Bibi.

The *Telegraph*, *Morning Post*, and *Daily Mail* concluded to stop.

"De English Press is an honour to de vorld. No oder correspondents spend half so much money. Twenty-one and bath,

twenty-two and bath, twenty-three and bath, and a private table," was the order.

Things now remained at a standstill for four-and-twenty entire hours. Something then happened, however, which completely changed the face of the situation. It was ten o'clock in the morning. Monsieur Bibi was in his office. "Boom!" went a heavy gun from the fort at the mouth of the harbour.

"Boom, boom!" went two more heavy guns in succession.

"Condemn dose target-missers," said Bibi. "Dey'll break all my vindows." He went to the window, and saw something startling.

"Boom, boom, boom!" went the guns. The fort was wrapped in a cloud of white smoke, through which gleamed periodical flashes of lightning, while thundering guns woke all the echoes of the bay.

A tremendous, magnificent white battleship, with foreign lines, was entering the harbour. She was flying a foreign flag, an admiral's pennant, and another signal which was peculiar.

"Monsieur Bibi! Save me," cried Wanda, running into the office.

"Save you? Vit my own life! Who is de peril?" screamed Bibi.

"My father. They are saluting his ship."

"Vot? Dat ship stops here?"

"Yes!"

"A Russian battleship in front off my hotel? Holy Saint Dominique!" He sprang to his desk, pounced like a tiger on a telegraph form, and wrote quickly. Then he rang the electric bell continuously. "At vonce," he said. "Don't lose a moments."

"What have you done?" asked Wanda.

"Am I a novice? Do I know not'ing of my business? Russian officers? Should I not order the two hundred dozen of champagne?" asked he. "Ah! I forgot. I beg deeply your Highness's pardon. You shall be saved, mademoiselle. On the honour of Bibi."

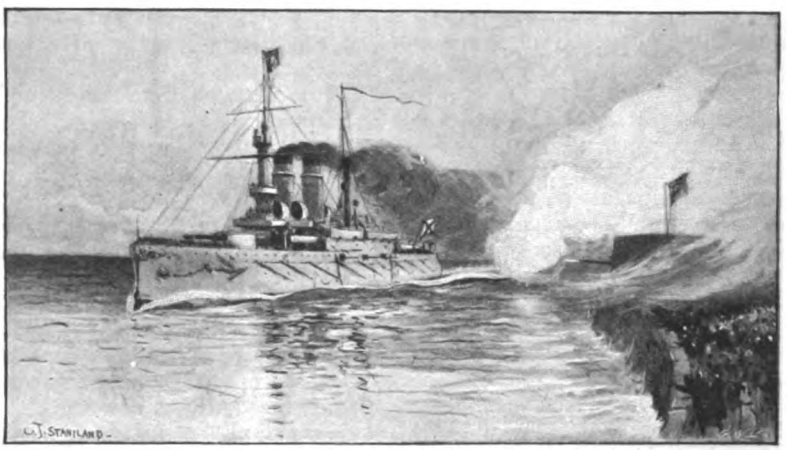
Grandly, majestically, and enormously, the great battleship *Holoet*, the finest vessel in the Russian navy, steamed to her position like a floating fort, and came to anchor.

A boat put off, an officer landed at the pier, and came to the hotel.

"I wish to see the manager."

Monsieur Bibi appeared.

The officer wanted information.



"'BOOM, BOOM, BOOM!' WENT THE GUNS."

"I haf no information."

"It will be paid for."

"I take no pay. All I know is at de service of my guests."

"Give me a room," said the officer.

"De intelligence of dese young foreign officers is wonderful: England should take warning. Thirty-seven, thirty-eight, and bath," said Bibi.

"Now," said the officer, "the Admiral wants to see you."

"I am here," said Bibi.

"You must come on board."

"Pardon! Have pity," said Bibi. His sad eyes threatened to fall upon his cheeks. "De sea makes me ill; so ill; it is incredible. I nefer make bot von voyage. It was across de Channel. I shall nevaire make anoder. I shall never see my native France again."

"But the Admiral wants to see you."

"I am here, I am not going away. It is an excellent hotel. My second cook is a Russian. I stake my family honour on his cromeskis."

"I will tell the Admiral," said the officer.

"I am a father myself. I feel for him. He shall have fifty-five, fifty-six, fifty-seven, and fifty-eight, meals in his apartments," said Bibi.

"The Grand Duke is with him."

"Vich Grand Duke?"

"Stanislas."

"Vat? De oder lofer? He has come too? Vive la Russe! De divine right of Kings shall be respected. De Royal suite!" he shouted. "Ready at vonce! Fill de sideboard vit champagne. Fill everyt'ing vit champagne."

The Admiral and the Grand Duke came ashore in a launch. Both were in uniform. The Admiral was a short, stout man, with an eagle eye and an eagle nose. He went straight into the hotel, stopped at the office, and said: "Mrs. Craven of Paris."

"What name, please?"

"Admiral Souvaroff."

He was shown to Princess Wanda's sitting-room. It was empty. In a moment she entered, very elegantly dressed, very haughty and very cold. They looked at each other without speaking: the father bursting with rage, the daughter keen-witted and defiant.

Princess Wanda had much strength of character, but she was also very soft of heart just then and very deeply in love. If Souvaroff had approached her in tenderness something might have been done. But he did not. He was an iron man, accustomed to instant obedience. He had owned serfs.

"So you, my daughter, are here with this scoundrel?"

She said nothing. She looked at him steadily.

"You are going on board my ship."

"Can you take me?"

"Yes. The English authorities will assist."

"Very well. When do I go?"

"Now."

"Toni," she said, calling to her maid, "pack my luggage."

The Admiral sat down, fuming. Princess Wanda went into the room adjoining to assist the maid.

The packing took some time. He grew more and more impatient. Finally, after twenty minutes, he walked into the room angrily. The maid was still packing.

"Where is your mistress?"

"I don't know."

"What?"

As a matter of fact nobody knew.

The Russian navy nearly lost a highly esteemed officer. Admiral Souvaroff was so angry that he nearly blew up. The one thing missing in the human machine is a safety-valve. To some men it would be worth a million.

The Grand Duke was a big, lumbering giant, who showed all his teeth when he talked. He had a clean-shaven chin, a dark moustache, and very bushy side-whiskers. Left by the Admiral in the hotel garden, he sat down with his equerry at one of the tables on the lawn.

"Gimme a bott tchampagne," he growled. This was at half-past eleven.

"Gimme a bott tchampagne," he repeated. This at ten minutes to twelve.

"Gimme a bott tchampagne," he snarled. This at ten past the hour.

"He would make a good clock," said Monsieur Bibi. "He doesn't know much English, but vot he knows is useful." Then he said to the head waiter: "Take six cases of champagne to de second-floor service. And hereafter don't close de cellar at night till de ship goes avay."

Wanda had disappeared for the second time. Not a trace of her destination could be found. It was learned that she had gone out by the side door, and had walked alone to the railway station, carrying only a small dressing-bag. She took a single ticket for Dover. Everybody was aghast.

Her father was unapproachable in his rage. The Grand Duke drank ducally. At intervals he would go upstairs and kick the spy. Most frantic of all was Ladislas. Wanda had left him no message. The sight of the Grand Duke made him furious, and he took sundry draughts of brandy, which made him more so. Finally, about four in the afternoon, he went out on the lawn and took a seat at the table next to the Grand Duke's. Every table was occupied by Russian officers. The champagne corks popped like volunteer shooting in a sham battle. All the officers pricked up their ears awaiting the scene. Monsieur Bibi knew that the sparks would fly, and they did. The two men glared at each other.

"Gimme a bott tchampagne," snapped the Grand Duke.

"Gimme a bott tchampagne," said Ladislas, undaunted. The Grand Duke poured out a full glass and rose to throw it in the face of his rival. He stumbled, however,

and spilt it on the equerry. He began to pour out another.

"Do you dare?" cried Ladislas.

"Fool," said the Grand Duke, contemptuously. This is translating very freely. They spoke Russian.

"You are my superior officer."

"I waive that."

"You are a Prince of the Blood Royal."

"I waive that."

"Then we fight," hissed Ladislas, hotly.

"At five to-morrow morning. Gimme a bott tchampagne."

Ladislas went to his room, and locked the door. He walked to and fro in misery, thinking of Wanda, trying to imagine where she was, and vainly hoping for a message. There came a knock at the door.

"Who is it?"

"Bibi."

Ladislas opened.

"Dere is a telegram coming for you, but you must not get it. You must go away."

"I cannot; I have to fight a duel."

"Fight all de duels you please, but don't get dat telegram."

"I will not go."

"Not for the Princess?"

"What? You know where she is?"

Monsieur Bibi winked his left pug-dog eye. It was convincing. Ladislas went.

The Admiral and the Ambassador had put their heads together and hit upon the right thing to do. They telegraphed the Minister of War at St. Petersburg to stop Ladislas's leave and order his immediate return. He must obey instantly or be court-martialed for desertion. At six o'clock that evening the answering telegram arrived. It was sent to his room. He had gone out. Where was he? He could not be found. The telegram was laid on the porter's desk in the hall. The Admiral and the Ambassador posted themselves in the smoking-room. Every few moments one of them would steal out and peer over the banisters at the telegram lying on the centre of the desk. They were to be the proof of its receipt in person. Then the watcher would steal back to his companion and say, "Not yet," and they would each drink a liqueur glass of vodka. They stole out several times. It was always still there. So was the fresh glass of vodka on the return to the room.

"If dey wait till he gets dat telegram," said Monsieur Bibi, "dey vill be under my smoking-room sofa." Bibi had seen the direction of their telegram: "To the Minister of War." He said to the waiter: "Dat is very special vodka, made by Mister Vodka himself, vit his own fair hands. Charge half a crown a glass."

Ladislas did not fail to keep his appointment next morning.

The duel was fought at five, in a secluded field, filled with young wheat and red poppies, about ten minutes' walk from the hotel. Ladislas was pale and resolute. The Grand Duke was imperially drunk. He could not have hit a tram-car, sitting, at five paces. Monsieur Bibi had marshalled the correspondents in a column of fours. He was immaculately dressed in black, with black tie. He had once been cook to a duellist. The men were placed at thirty-one yards rise. This was the suggestion of the *Daily Telegraph*, who gravely said that was the rule in England! The seconds were the equerry and a Russian officer. The wavering and eccentric motion of the Grand Duke's arm after he got his pistol cocked was calculated to make onlookers nervous. Monsieur Bibi wished he had a tree. He had never cared for trees, but he had a fancy just then for a large, thick oak. He took a strategic position behind the correspondents, who were cool. The *Morning Post* said it was like Atbara.

The equerry gave the word. "One—two three—fire!" Ladislas could not shoot at a Prince of the Blood Royal. He raised his right arm to its full length, and fired in the air.

The Grand Duke started at the noise, and pulled himself together. He looked curiously up in the air.

"Vat you shooting at?"

Ladislas had confused him. He thought for the moment that it was a shooting party.

"I cannot shoot at you."

"But I can shoot at you."

"That is your right."

"Say you vill not marry Wanda."

"I will not."

"Oh! You vill not marry Wanda? Den I don't shoot."

"I will marry Wanda."

"Vot you mean? You vill and you vill not. Foolishness."

"You don't understand. You said to me: 'Say you will not marry Wanda.' I said, 'I will not.' That is to say, I said I will not say so. Then you thought I meant yes, consenting to your desire. On the contrary, however, whether I live or die——"

He stopped. The Grand Duke, lulled by the sequence of sibilant verbs, was falling

sound asleep and swaying to and fro. His pistol was still cocked, and pointed directly at the right toe of a Prince of the Blood Royal. Clearly this could not go on.

"Time," said the *Morning Post.*

The equerry went to His Highness, and

"THE EQUERRY WENT TO HIS HIGHNESS, AND TOOK AWAY THE PISTOL."

took away the pistol. "Gimme a bott tchampagne," murmured His Highness, feebly, and then, leaning on the equerry, fell sound asleep.

The party separated.

The Grand Duke slept all day. He dined with the Admiral and the Ambassador. It was nine o'clock in the evening.

The spy came tearing down the road from the pier at full speed. "Come! Quick! I have found them."

They rose, and followed him rapidly. The Grand Duke and the spy took long, rapid strides, the Ambassador trotted, and the Admiral, whose legs were shortest, had to canter. The spy led them for a short distance out upon the pier. "See," he said, and pointed to a large brass telescope, mounted on a tripod, which was used by the public for observing the heavens at a penny per observation. The spy seized the instrument, turned it downward from the sky and along the cliffs. In a moment it pointed at a cottage, boldly facing the sea, about half a mile away. The ground-floor windows of this cottage were brilliantly lighted, so brilliantly that they caught the unaided eye.

"A penny each," cried the man.

The Grand Duke, the Ambassador, and the Admiral, excited and eager, bumped their heads in trying to get three eyes behind one eye-piece. This was impossible. Precedence ruled.

"Who? Vich? Vere?" snapped the Grand Duke, impatiently. He was sweeping the whole coast with the glass, and finally located a gas-lamp about ten feet distant. "Ah," said he; then he swore. The spy again pointed the glass at the cottage, and the three looked by turns through the long half-mile of calm, still darkness.

The glowing lights were in the drawing-room, which throughout nearly its whole extent was commanded by the glass. It was a strange sensation to the observers. Through the powerful telescope they were brought so near to the mute and moving personages that it seemed they could almost touch them. They seemed to be present, to hear the words that were being said, though half a mile of night lay between. And the picture was a beautiful one.

The influence of Wanda, Ladislas, and his family had sufficed in St. Petersburg to soften the heart of the Church. The Greek Church authorities in London had come to

the rescue. The drawing-room of Wanda's hiding-place had been transformed into a temporary chapel. A large table had been dressed as an improvised altar. Many candles lighted the room with a golden glow, in which the figure of the Christ upon the cross stood out solemnly. There was a Greek priest and an assistant priest in full canonicals. The priest stood

"'A PENNY EACH,' SAID THE MAN ON THE PIER."

"'FOR EVER AND EVER,' SAID THE PRIEST IN THE ROOM."

in front of the altar, and before him knelt, with bowed heads, the handsome lover and his beautiful love. The assistant priest stood on the left. Monsieur Bibi, in immaculate evening dress, stood on the right. The priest's hands were raised. The Admiral was looking through the glass.

"For ever and ever, world without end ——" said the priest in the room.

"A penny each," said the man on the pier.

The Admiral turned away, his back to his friends, and looked out on the sea.

Rage, pride, a father's love, and the powerful influence of religion upon a superstitious Russian mind struggled in conflict within him. "Ouf!" he said, with the angry, convulsive movement of a proud man who has been beaten and in whom the better feelings are striving for the mastery. He turned again to the glass.

"A penny each," said the man.

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son——" said the priest.

The Admiral gave a deep sigh, submitted to the inevitable, and turned to his friends.

"Amen," said he, removing his hat.

The Grand Duke and the Ambassador bowed gravely, with uncovered heads.

Football Dogs.

By Albert H. Broadwell.

Photographs by A. J. Johnson.

AN easterly wind was blowing hard, when we were requested, by special invitation, to attend a certain football match, which, when all has been said and done, has proved to be the most extraordinary exhibition of "footer" that has ever been known in the history of the game.

This most astonishing game of football took place not a hundred miles from New Cross, and we are indebted to the proprietors of the New Cross Empire, and especially to Mr. H. Raymond, their manager, for the arrangements which have enabled us to secure the remarkable pictures which illustrate this article. The football dogs, whose spirited play we are to chronicle in detail presently, are for the most part bull-terriers of high degree. They belong to the brothers Riccobono, of Manchester, to whose wonderful knowledge of animals and their training no small amount of praise is due.

The writer is willing to challenge any man of ordinary or extraordinary pluck to stand in any place of his own choosing with a football in his hand, and await the onslaught of the footballers shown in the illustrations of this article. Bull-terriers were bull-terriers ever, and Providence help the man who dare stand between them and the "leather" when once it is given over to be dealt with at their mercy. It may well be imagined, therefore, that no small amount of trouble was required to induce these fiercest of footballers to agree to anything like rules.

"HEADS I WIN, TAILS YOU LOSE."

In the first place, it was absolutely indispensable to toss for sides — look at the result. "Heads I win, tails you lose." Could anything be more human, more expressive of anxious and heart-breaking expectancy than this? The two "captains," Bull-punch and Bull-rag, are watching the coin as it settles on the turf with a thud. Is it "heads" or "tails"? Never mind, they are off, and the fun threatens to wax fast and furious.

Again, however, restraint has to be put upon the too eager opponents, and a proper "kick-off" is arranged for, and it *is* a kick-off such as has never been photographed before. The magnificent attitude of the champion kicker of Bullshire has been secured with marvellous skill, and is a tribute to our unfortunate artist, who, not unlike the writer himself, dodged, for all he was worth, the awful rushes that over and over again became a source of awe and terror to the minds of the privileged few whose luck it was to witness this wonderful game.

"THE KICK-OFF."

We shall now endeavour to describe the match in something like professional style.

With a big wind blowing behind them, the visitors (you will spot them at once,

of course) were not long before they made their presence felt, and the game was not many minutes old ere they popped the ball into the net, the corner kick which led to it being splendidly placed by Bully. Bullrag, however, was charged ere he had a chance of getting at the ball, so that there was no hardship to the Bullpunchers in having the goal disallowed.

"THEY MADE THEIR PRESENCE FELT."

"A SHARP TUSSLE."

Though only three minutes old, there had been a good many interruptions to the game, every petty charge or spill being whistled up, but the Bullpunchers were not to be beaten.

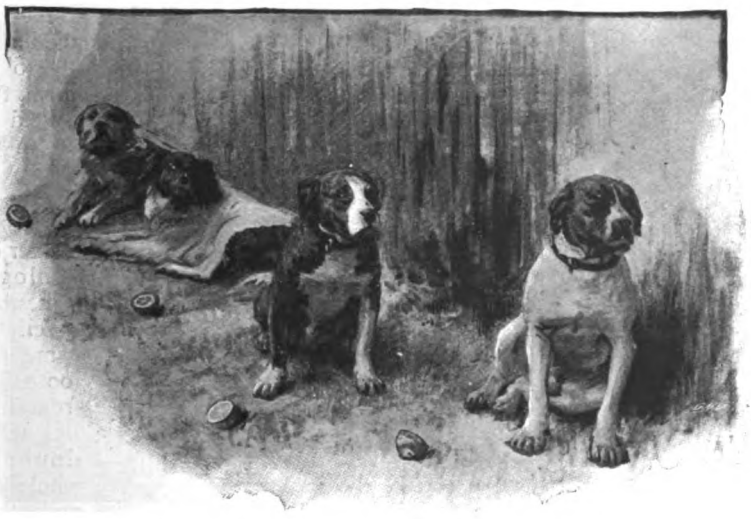
Rushes and sharp tussles from end to end became the order, Bullstick playing in much improved form, and a few seconds before the interval Bullpunch saved a goal by a hair's breadth. There was little to choose between the teams, however. The Bullpunchers were perhaps a little superior in attack, but the Bullrags' defence stood out much sounder than that of the home eleven.

At last the home team got well away, and the right wing beating all opposition, the ball came straight across to Bullfast, who would inevitably have scored had it not been for Bulldash, who saved a goal in the nick of time by a spirited onslaught on the leather almost upon goal.

Half-time, of course, came as a matter of mutual congratulation; but, alas! there was no keeping these fellows in hand. We offered the visitors lemon, duly sliced as you see, but they would have none. They were anxious to start afresh.

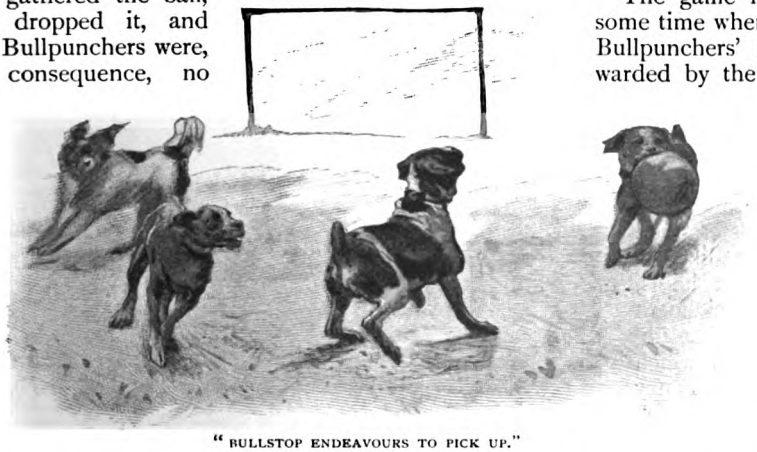
Not a minute elapsed ere the home side nearly scored in a scrimmage, following a corner; Bullstop having saved before the final tussle. About this

"SAVED A GOAL BY A HAIR'S BREADTH."



"HALF-TIME."

period Bullstuff got in a rather long ground shot, and Bullstop, who had been partially covered by his backs, endeavoured to pick up, gathered the ball, but dropped it, and the Bullpunchers were, in consequence, no goal to none. After that reverse the home team became far more dangerous than previously, and, to say the least, experienced very hard luck on one occasion, the ball going right over when everybody expected it to go into the net.



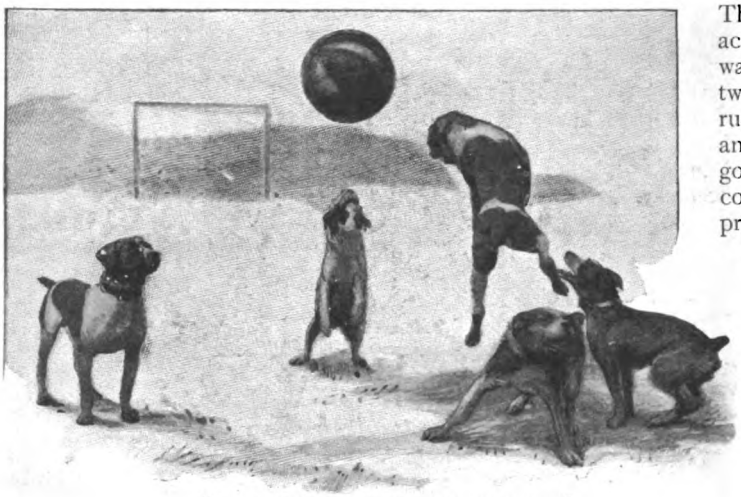
"BULLSTOP ENDEAVOURS TO PICK UP."

A splendid bit of work by the Bullpunchers' forwards carried hostilities into the visitors' half, the passing and re-passing causing the greatest excitement. Good exchange kicking ended to the Bullpunchers' advantage, but a grand combined effort of the visitors' forwards, in which Bullrag was the leader, took the game to the Bullpunchers' half, where Bullrat effected a superb save.

The game had proceeded for some time when the efforts of the Bullpunchers' forwards were rewarded by the first point in the match. It was the right wing who introduced the good work, carrying the ball into close quarters.

Occasionally the visitors made a threatening dash into the home quarters, Bullstick doing useful work on the extreme left, but their shots were wide of the goal. On the other hand, the Bullpunchers, with not the best of luck, kept

"PASSING AND RE-PASSING."



"CARRYING THE BALL INTO CLOSE QUARTERS."

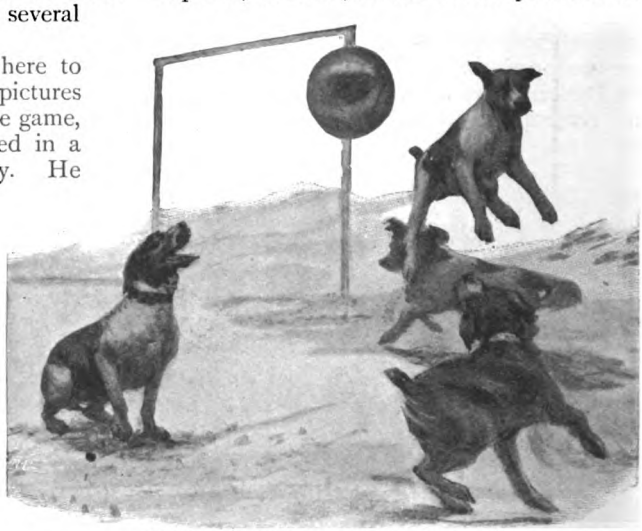
They worked hard right across the line, and there was little to choose between them, though Bullrush worked very hard and got in a lot of good solid work that could not be too highly praised.

The writer offers every apology for the somewhat intricate description of this game, for adepts at football may differ from his opinion; but there is little doubt that the whole of Bullshire and the visitors, too, quite agree that the contest was one unequalled for dash and science; should additional proof be required, however, he has much pleasure in reproducing here a photo. of the "leather" after the game, so that no doubts as to authenticity and fervour may be allowed to arise in the minds of the more critical followers of our national winter pastime.

pegging away with plenty of vigour but little method at the visitors' goal, in front of which Bullstump and Bullstand held their own, and Bullstop warded off several dangerous shots.

It may, perhaps, be permitted here to point out the umpires in the pictures that follow. Bullawe watches the game, or rather the ball, as it is tossed in a jumble of indescribable medley. He looks tired and worried—what umpire does not?—and distinctly wishes it were all over.

Bullbull is more determined—he sticks to his post like the champion umpire that he is, and no amount of excitement will draw him out of that imperturbable serenity in which we find him here. Fancy standing there as he does, when "well-played centre" accomplishes a feat almost unparalleled in the history of the game!



"PEGGING AWAY WITH PLENTY OF VIGOUR."

The finish, however, will for ever remain undecided. The superiority of the home team was, however, clear enough, for they played the better game all round, particularly as far as their forwards were concerned.

THE "LEATHER" AFTER THE MATCH.

War-Pictures in "Punch": 1841-1899.

By J. Holt Schooling.

[*The Proprietors of "Punch" have given special permission to reproduce the accompanying illustrations.*]

So many wars have occurred during the term of Mr. Punch's life that it is no easy task to make a choice from his pictorial chronicle of them. The present selection refers to about thirty different wars, many of the smaller campaigns, British and foreign, being omitted, and the pictures now gathered represent less than one-tenth part of Mr. Punch's splendid collection of war-pictures, all of which were drawn by his special artists.

1.—The first war-picture in *Punch*. 1841. Anglo-Chinese War.

The first war-picture in *Punch* is that in No. 1, published in 1841, on page 74 of Volume I. It relates to our war with China, nearly sixty years ago, which arose out of a dispute about the sending of opium into China by British merchants in the East. The Emperor of China prohibited the opium-trade, and this caused the war. Some months later the Emperor of China became so annoyed with us that on January 5, 1840, he issued an edict interdicting all trade and intercourse with England for ever. Our Navy, as usual, did good service, and in the picture a Jack Tar carries away on his back a kicking, struggling Chinaman. We won, and a result of this war was the cession of Hong Kong to Great Britain.

No. 2 was published on November 26,

3.—Another Russian Victory!!! 1854. Crimean War.

1853. Russia declared war against Turkey on November 1, 1853, and was defeated by the Turks at Oltenitza on November 4th—this name is written on the cannon-ball which

2.—"A Bear with a Sore Head." 1853. Crimean War.

4.—Jack's Holiday.—A Scene off Balaklava. *Jack* "Ask yer Honour's pardon, but may me and Jim Grampus have a liberty day ashore, to go a shootin' with them Sojers?" 1854. Crimean War. By Leech.

has given the bear a sore head. At the end of March, 1854, we joined in the fight, England and France then declaring war against Russia.

The cartoon in No. 3 was published on July 8, 1854, after the Russians had been repulsed at the siege of Silistria — when they claimed a victory. The date of No. 4 is November 18, 1854, at a time when our soldiers were in the thick of the fight. The Battle of the Alma had been won on September 20th, Balaklava had been fought on October 25th, the Russians had been beaten at Inkerman on November 5th—and so "Jack" very naturally asks his Captain for "a liberty day ashore, to go a shootin' with them Sojers."

5.—A new regiment to fight the Chinese. 1857. Anglo-Chinese War.

No. 5, published in 1857, refers to another war with China in 1856–60. Mr. Punch suggested the formation of a regiment composed of all the Italian hurdy-gurdy men in London—those wretches who then ground out "Poor Dog Tray," "Bobbing Around," "Billy Barlow," etc.—the "eight-a-penny walnut" men, the "bloater" men, and other street nuisances of the time, who by their hideous shouting should terrify the Chinese. By the way, a curious incident of this war was that one A-lum, a

6.—Willing Hands for India. 1857. Indian Mutiny.

7.—Execution of "John Company"; or, the Blowing up (there ought to be) in Leadenhall Street. 1857. Indian Mutiny.

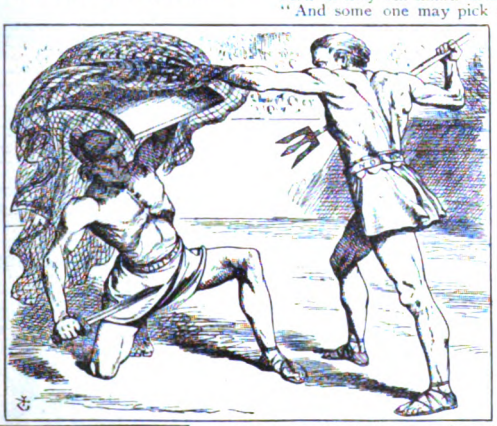
8.—The Giant and the Dwarf. "Bravo, my little fellow! You shall do all the fighting, and we'll divide the Glory!" 1859. Franco-Austrian War.

9.—Poland's Chain-Shot. 1863. Russo-Polish War. By Tenniel.

12.—Honesty and Policy. Britannia. "Well! I've done my best. If they will smash each other, they must." Nap. *(aside)*. "And some one may pick up the pieces!" 1866. Prussian-Austrian War. By Tenniel.

Chinese baker, was accused of poisoning bread. [This is not from *Punch;* it is recorded as a fact of history.]

Pictures 6 and 7 relate to the Indian Mutiny. "Willing Hands for India" was published August 29, 1857; the Cawnpore massacre had occurred on June 28th, Lucknow was besieged by the rebels, and, on July 25th, the British had been repulsed with severe loss at Arrah. The call at home for men for India was at once responded to. That was forty-three years ago, and now, in 1900, a much more urgent call for willing hands for Africa has met with a splendid



10.—The American Gladiators—Habet! 1865. American Civil War. By Tenniel.

11.—The Re-United States. Colonel North (to Colonel South). "Wal, Brother; guess we couldn't both win: so let's shake hands, and just liquor up." 1865. American Civil War. By Tenniel.

13.—The Abyssinian Question. Britannia. "Now, then, King Theodore! How about those prisoners?" 1867. Anglo-Abyssinian War. By Tenniel.

14.—Franco-German War. 1870. By Tenniel.

response that has cheered the heart of the whole British Empire, and has proved the staunch unity of our wide-spread race.

No. 7, published August 15, 1857, refers to the outcry against the East India Company (whose head-quarters were in Leadenhall Street, London) for their mismanagement of affairs in India. In 1858 the entire administration of India was transferred from the Company to the Crown.

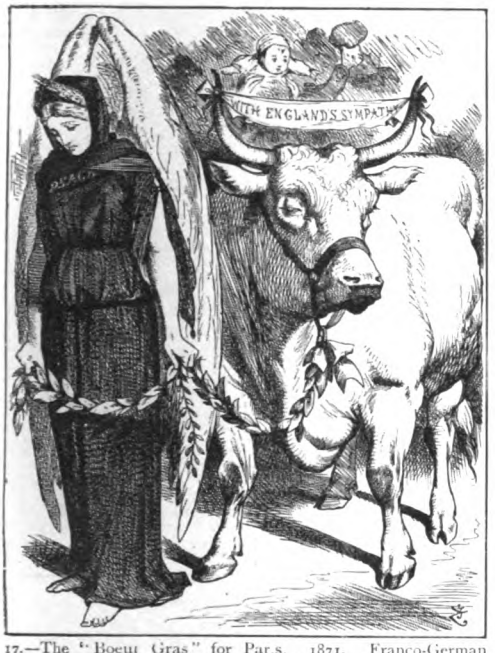
In cartoon No. 8, published June 11, 1859, the astute Napoleon III. is addressing the King of Sardinia, with whom he was allied against Austria. Austria got the worse of the fight, and was finally defeated at Solferino, June 24, 1859. This King of Sardinia [Victor-Emmanuel] was recognised as King of Italy in February, 1861.

15.—The Battle of the Amazons. Germania. "Terms? Yes. And for Security you will give me three Fortresses." France. "Never!" Germania. "So! Then I shall *take* them." 1870. Franco-German War. By Tenniel.

16.—"Demand thy Life!" 1870. Franco-German War. By Tenniel.

The insurrection of Poland against her hard task-master, Russia, is referred to in No. 9—Poland rams her chains into the cannon as a missile against her oppressor.

America's bloody Civil War of 1861–65 is



17.—The "Boeuf Gras" for Paris. 1871. Franco-German War. By Tenniel.

illustrated in Nos. 10 and 11. This war between the Northern and Southern States, on the matter of secession of certain States from the Union and upon the slave question, cost three-quarters of a million of men and about 750 millions sterling. It was the most awful war that has ever occurred since the long war of 1793–1815 between England and France.

18.—Dearly Bought. Sir Garnet. "It don't look much, Madam, but it has cost good money, and better lives." Britannia. "And but for you, Sir Garnet, might have cost more of both!" ["King Koffee's Umbrella has been brought to England."—*Morning Paper.*] 1874. Anglo-Ashanti War. By Tenniel.

19.—"Trial by Battle." 1877. Russo-Turkish War. By Tenniel.

No. 12 relates to the war between Prussia and Austria in 1866 over the Holstein question. The Austrians were finally beaten at

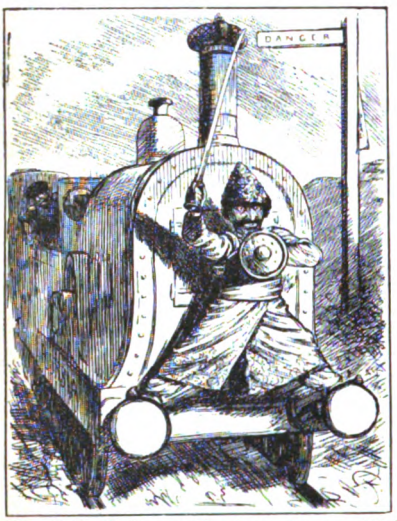
20.—Tightening the Grip. 1877. Russo-Turkish War. By Tenniel.

Sadowa on July 3, 1866, and Prussia's position in Europe was greatly enhanced.

21.—An Awkward "Position." How a Doubt suddenly occurred to a noted Wimbledon Prize-Winner (who had volunteered for Zululand) as to the Advantages of the "Back-Position" in actual Warfare! 1879. Anglo-Zulu War. By Charles Keene.

The amusing cartoon in No. 13 reminds me of one of the first toys I can remember to have possessed—one of those little painted plaster figures of King Theodore of Abyssinia, which were sold here in 1866.

There is a very fine Tenniel-cartoon in No. 14, published July 30, 1870. The mis-

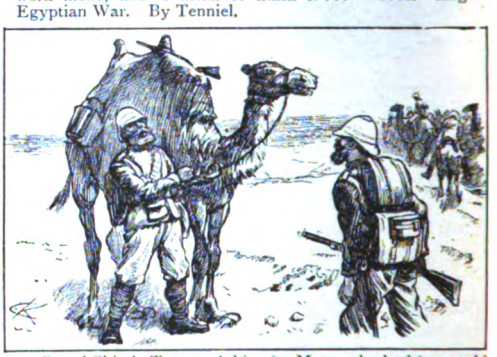


22.—"Poor Buffer!" (Danger Signals up. Prospect of Collision at the Afghan Junction.) 1878. Anglo-Afghan War. By Charles Keene.

guided Napoleon III. had declared war against Germany on July 19th, and here, on his march towards Berlin with his young son (the Prince Imperial, afterwards killed by the Zulus), the shade of the great Napoleon looms up from the mist to stay the war so fatal to France.

23.—The School of Musketry. Boer (*to* F.-M. H.R.H. The Commander-in-Chief). "I say, Dook! You don't happen to want a practical 'Musketry Instructor,' do you?" 1881. Anglo-Boer War. By Tenniel.

24.—The Lion and the Fox. British Lion. "Going to help me, are you? Thank you for nothing, Master Fox. I began the work alone, and I mean to finish it!!!" 1882. Anglo-Egyptian War. By Tenniel.



25.—Camel-Ship! Tommy Atkins (to Mate, who had been told off to the same refractory Animal). "Oh, look here, Bill, here's this cussed Beast has been playing 'Cup and Ball' with me for the last Two Hours! Missed me ever so many times!" 1885. Anglo-Soudan War. By Charles Keene.

26.—New Neighbours. *John Chinaman.* "Me glad see you here, John Chin-Chin!" 1886. Anglo-Burmese War. By Linley Sambourne.

Nos. 15, 16, and 17 show developments of the Franco-German War; the last cartoon refers to the kindly help we sent into Paris as soon as the gates were open—to be repaid, *now*, by the indecent and spiteful exultation of France over our mischances in South Africa!

In No. 18 the present Commander-in-Chief hands to Britannia the spoil of the Ashanti War—King Koffee's Umbrella.

27.—The Thin *Brown* Line. 1893. Egyptian-Dervish War. By Linley Sambourne.

The war between Russia and Turkey, in 1876–77, is illustrated by the two powerful Tenniels in Nos. 19 and 20. Charles Keene depicts, in No. 21, a disconcerting incident of the Zulu War of 1879, and the Afghan War of 1878–9 is the subject of Charles Keene's picture in No. 22, where the "Poor Buffer" is Shere Ali, the Ameer, and the crafty engine-driver—Russia.

No. 23 was published May 7, 1881, after Mr. Gladstone had sat down under the Majuba Hill defeat in February, and had, in March, announced the "conclusion of peace" with the Boers.

28.—The Jap in the China Shop. *Master of the Situation (log.).* "Now then, you pig-headed old Pigtail, open your Shop—and hand me the Keys!" 1895. China-Japanese War. By Linley Sambourne.

29.—Jap the Giant-Killer. 1894. China-Japanese War. By Tenniel.

No. 24, published August 5, 1882, refers to the war with Egypt. Alexandria was bombarded by our fleet in July, and on August 3rd Suez was occupied by British marines. France wanted to come in the affair, but the British lion didn't quite see it.

Charles Keene's funny tale of the camel-corps in Egypt was published March 14, 1885, after Gordon had been killed at the fall of Khartoum on January 26th; this expedition was the first occasion where Australian troops shared in the fights of the Empire, and on March 3, 1885, a contin-

30.—"La Gloire!" French Soldier. "I suffer—I die! No matter!—Our Victory will annoy John Bull!" (*Vide French Press.*) "What the French have to consider is the balance of advantages for France, not the balance of disadvantages for England." *Times*, Oct. 9, 1895. Franco-Madagascar War. By Tenniel.

31.—Ashanti Again! Britannia (*to L-rd W-ls-l-y, "the man who has been there"*). "You know all about the business, Commander-in-Chief. But *this* time I expect something more than an Umbrella." 1895. Anglo-Ashanti War. By Tenniel.

gent of New South Wales men left Sydney for the Soudan. This war was also the first occasion where a war-balloon was used in active service by the English Army.

The Annexation of Upper Burmah to the British Empire is illustrated by Mr. Linley Sambourne in No. 26, and in No. 27 there is another piece of Mr. Sambourne's always beautiful work, which refers to the immense

32.—In the Desert! Shade of Gordon (*to* John Bull). "REMEMBER!" 1896. Egyptian-Dervish War. By Tenniel.

improvement in the fighting quality of the fellaheen troops under the guidance and instruction of their British officers. Tommy Atkins is saying, as he looks at this small member of "the thin *brown* line,"

33.—Jonathan's Latest. Shade of Columbus (*aside*). "Had I foreseen it would have come to this—Caramba!—I would never have discovered America!" 1896. Preceding the Spanish-American War. By Tenniel.

"An' 'ere's *to* you, my fine Fellah, coffee 'ide and inky hair
May yet shoulder stand to shoulder with me in a British Square!"

At Omdurman, a few years later than the date of No. 27, Tommy Atkins's prediction was verified.

Two very good cartoons relating to the war between China and Japan are shown in Nos. 28 and 29—one by Mr. Linley Sam-

34.—The Krüger Cat. ["The President throughout this crisis has shown himself to be not ungenerous, and eminently shrewd. To play fast and loose with his principal captives is neither generous nor shrewd."—*Times.*] 1896. The Jameson Raid. By Linley Sambourne.

35.—"ENOUGH!" 1897. The Turko-Greek War. By Tenniel.

bourne, the other by Sir John Tenniel. The French war in Madagascar is the subject of No. 30, published October 19, 1895; at the end of September the French captured Antananarivo, and the attempts of the natives to resist French occupation collapsed.

In October, 1895, King Prempeh of Ashanti rejected the British ultimatum, and on November 22nd Sir Francis Scott,

36.—"Brothers in Arms." 1897. North-West Frontier of India War. By Tenniel.

37.—The Duello. "Oh, the Pity of it!" 1898. The Spanish-American War. By Tenniel.

38. WELCOME! Britannia. "Sirdar! I thank you! I am proud of you!" 1898. The Omdurman Campaign. By Tenniel.

Commander-in-Chief of the expedition to Ashanti, left England. No. 31 was published November 23, 1895, and Britannia is telling Lord Wolseley that "*this* time I expect something more than an Umbrella." Compare this cartoon with No. 18, which refers to the Ashanti War of 1874. In No. 32 the shade of General Gordon appears to John Bull in the Desert. This was published

39.—A Word to the Un-Wise. John Bull (to Orange Free State). "Stand aside, young man—I've no quarrel with *you!*" 1899. The Boer War. By Tenniel.

40.—A Prehistoric "Peace Conference"! 1899. By E. T. Reed.

March 28th, 1896, shortly after the disastrous defeat of the Italian army at Adowa by King Menelek of Abyssinia, an event that caused great loss of prestige to European arms in a dangerous quarter. In consequence of this defeat of the Italians, Egyptian troops were ordered to Wady Halfa, as a precautionary measure, and we, being much interested in the welfare of Egypt, received this note of warning depicted in No. 32.

The trouble between the United States and Cuba led to the Spanish-American War, and so I have connected No. 33 with that war, although the war itself did not commence until April, 1898. At the time when Mr. Linley Sambourne's graphic cartoon No. 34 was published, some of the leading members of the Reform Committee, connected with the Jameson Raid, had been sentenced to death by President Kruger, and their fate was uncertain. Hence the allusion in the cartoon.

In No. 35 Europe holds up an authoritative hand to stop the war between Turkey and Greece. The gallant conduct of our native allies in the North-West Frontier War of 1897, in India, is the

41.—A Hitherto Unknown Meissonier. "The Morning of Waartelouw (or its South African equivalent), 1900 (or possibly sooner)." Oom-Poleon reviews his "Oude Gaard" before the Battle. 1899. The Boer War. By E. T. Reed.

42.—The Latest Piece of French *Intelligence*. Les "Iglandeurs"! The French Press has announced that "British Agents have been busily enlisting retired French Soldiers for the Scottish Regiments. They have been immediately put into the Kilt and forwarded to South Africa"! 1899. The Boer War. By E. T. Reed.

43.—Krüger's Vision. "What, will the 'Thin Red' Line stretch out to the crack of doom?"—Macbeth, Act iv., Scene 1. 1899. The Boer War. By Tenniel.

subject of No. 36, and No. 37 refers to the war between Spain and the United States.

In No. 38 Lord Kitchener is receiving the thanks of his country for his great victory at Omdurman, and in No. 39 John Bull is warning the Orange Free State to stand aside from the trouble with the South African Republic.

44.—At the Front. *Captain of Gun (as he fires).* "'Ere's another nice little Capful o' Cornfetti for Mister Joobert!" 1899. The Boer War. By L. Raven-Hill.

Mr. E. T. Reed's drawing of "A Prehistoric Peace Conference," No. 40, was published January 11, 1899, and it refers to the peace-conference proposals issued by the Czar. Russia and England are discussing their affairs, Japan and China are

45.—Plain English. John Bull. "As you *will* fight, you shall have it. *This* time it's a Fight to a Finish." 1899. The Boer War. By Tenniel.

finishing *their* peace conference, Cousin Jonathan sits on Spain, and President Kruger's face is eloquent with a plausible peaceableness.

Another very amusing drawing by Mr. E. T. Reed is that in No. 41, and "Les 'iglandeurs," No. 42, also by Mr. Reed, is an extraordinarily funny conception of Frenchmen dressed in the garb of our Scots Regiments, and sent out by us to fight the Boers.

Glancing at No. 43, Mr. L. Raven-Hill

46.—"England Expects——" Shade of F.-M. the Duke of Wellington. "All right for *your* Service, Nelson; but, begad, Sir, they'll have to strengthen *mine!*" 1897. By Tenniel.

has a good joke in No. 44, at General Joubert's expense, and No. 45 is a splendid realization, by Sir John Tenniel, of the fixed intention of the British Empire to see the Boer War through to "a Finish"—*this* time.

The cartoon in No. 46 was published in 1897, after the voting of large additions to the Navy. Wellington says to Nelson, "All right for *your* Service, Nelson; but, begad, Sir, they'll have to strengthen *mine!*" And the Empire is ready, even anxious, to give full force to these words of Wellington.

A Master of Craft.

By W. W. Jacobs.

XXI.

THE summer passed quickly. All too quickly for Captain Barber, who said that it was the shortest he ever remembered. But, then, his memory, although greatly improved, was still none of the best, many things which Mrs. Church fondly and frequently referred to having escaped it altogether.

He even forgot that he was to be married in October until Mr. Gibson put his banns up. This acted as a specific, and Captain Barber, putting the best face he could on the matter, went and interviewed the verger on his own behalf.

The wedding-day found him resigned, but dazed. The morning air was crisp and chill, with a faint odour of dead leaves and the aromatic smell of chrysanthemums which decked the front garden. The house was as clean as a new pin, or the deck of the *Foam*, which, having been thoroughly scrubbed down in honour of the occasion, was now slowly drying in the sun. Down below the crew, having finished their labours for the day, were anxiously attiring themselves in their Sunday best.

The grizzled head of Ben popped out at the companion and sniffed heartily at the smell of wet deck. His coat was of black, and his new boots creaked deliciously as he slowly paced the deck and affected ignorance of the little cluster of heads at the forecastle hatch. He went below again, and a murmur, gentle but threatening, rose against Tim.

"You wait," said the youth, sharply.

"If you've made me waste eighteenpence, Timmy," said a stout A.B. named Jones, "the Lord ha' mercy on you, 'cos I won't."

The cook, who was clinging to the ladder with his head level with the deck, gave an excited gasp. "Tim's all right," he said; "look there."

The last words were jerked out of him by reason of the weight of his friends, who were now leaning on him, breathing heavily under the stress of strong excitement. Ben was on deck again, and in an obviously unconcerned manner was displaying a silk hat of great height to all who cared to look. The mate's appearance alone, without the flags which dressed the schooner, would have indicated a festival.

Three or four labourers sunning themselves on the quay were much impressed and regarded him stolidly; a fisherman, presuming upon the fact that they both earned their living on the water, ventured to address him.

"A FISHERMAN VENTURED TO ADDRESS HIM."

Copyright, 1900, by W. W. Jacobs, in the United States of America.

"Now, then," said Jones, as he took something reverently from an empty bunk, "who's going up fust?"

"I ain't," said Tim.

"Wot about you, cookie?" said Jones.

"Well, wot about me?" demanded the other.

"I thought p'rhaps you'd like to lead the way," said Mr. Jones, mildly.

"You thought wrong, then," said the cook, shortly.

"It was jist a compliment," urged Mr. Jones.

"I don't like flattery," said the cook; "never did."

Mr. Jones sighed and shook his head irresolutely. The other A.B. patted him on the back.

"You look a fair bloomin' treat," he said, heartily. "You go up fust; you look as though you've slep' in one a'most."

"None o' your larks, you know," remarked Mr. Jones, with suspicious sourness; "no backing out of it and leavin' me there by myself."

There was a chorus of virtuous but profane indignation. It was so indignant that Mr. Jones apologized, and stood for some time regarding the article in his hand with the face of a small child eyeing a large powder. Then he clapped it on his head and went on deck.

The mate was just talking to the fisherman about an uncle of his (born since his promotion) who had commanded a brig, when his voice failed him, and he gazed open-mouthed at a stout seaman who had just come up on deck. On the stout seaman's face was the look of one who sees a vision many miles off; on the stout seaman's head was a high hat of antique pattern which had suffered in the brushing. To avoid the mate's eye he folded his arms and, leaning over the side, gazed across the river. Words trembled on the mate's lips, but they died away in a squeak as a little top-hatted procession of three issued coyly from the forecastle and, ranging itself beside Mr. Jones, helped him to look across the river.

"I never did," said the fisherman. "What *are* we a-coming to?"

The mate did not stay to inform him. He walked hastily to the quartette and, bursting with rage, asked Jones what he meant by it.

"Mean by wot, sir?" asked Jones, in surprise.

"Top-hats," said the mate, choking.

The four turned and regarded him stolidly, keeping as close together as possible for the sake of moral support and the safety of their head-gear.

"For the weddin', sir," said Jones, as though that explained everything.

"You take 'em off," said the mate, sharply. "I won't let you wear 'em."

"I beg your pardin," said Jones, with great politeness, "we got these 'ere 'ats for the weddin', an' we're a-goin' to wear 'em."

He took the offending article off and brushed it tenderly with his coat-sleeve, while the furious mate looked assault and battery at the other three. Tim, whose hat came well down over his eyes, felt comparatively safe; but the cook, conscious that his perched lightly on the top of his head, drew back a pace. Then he uttered an exclamation as Captain Nibletts, who was officiating as best man, came hurriedly down the cliff.

"Hats?" said the little skipper, disengaging himself from the mate's grasp, as he came on board. "Yes, I don't mind."

"Wot about Cap'n Barber?" demanded the mate, impressively.

"If they was pudding-basins 'e wouldn't mind," said Nibletts, testily; "he's that nervous 'e don't know what 'e's doing hardly. He was raving like a madman for five minutes cos 'e couldn't fasten his collar, and then I found he'd forgot to put his shirt on. He don't care."

He hurried down to the cabin and then came bustling up again. His small face was strained with worry, and the crew eyed him respectfully as he came forward and dealt out white satin favours.

"Cap'n Barber 'll be all right with you looking arter 'im, sir," said Jones, with strong conviction.

"That he will," said the cook, nodding.

"There's some whisky in a bottle in my locker, cook," said Nibletts, dancing about nervously; "give the hands one drink each, cook. Only one, mind."

The men thanked him, and with kindly eyes watched him go ashore. The cook went down for the whisky, and Tim, diving into the forecastle, brought up four mugs.

"He must ha' meant another bottle," said Jones, as the cook came slowly up again with a bottle containing one dose.

"There ain't another," said the cook; "he's 'alf off 'is 'ed."

There was a pained silence. "We must toss for it," said Jones, at length; "that is, unless you chaps don't want it."

"Toss," said three voices speaking as one.

Jones sighed, and the coins were produced. The prize fell to Tim, and he leaned

against the windlass and slowly poured the yellow liquid into his mug.

"There's more than I thought there was," remarked Mr. Jones, in surprise.

"Bottles is deceiving," said the cook.

"It ain't the fust toss as Tim 'as won," said the third man, darkly.

The ordinary seaman made no reply, but, stepping over to the water-cask, added with great care a little water.

"Here's your 'ealth, chaps," he said, good-naturedly, as he drank, "and may you never want a drink."

"You've never drunk all that, Tim?" said Mr. Jones, anxiously.

Tim shook his head. "There's too much to drink all at once," he said, gravely, and sat with the mug on his knee, gazing ashore. "It's warming me all over," he mused. "I never tasted sich whisky afore. I'm in a gentle glow."

So was the cook; a glow which increased to fever heat as the youth raised the mug to his lips again, and slowly drained it and handed it to him to wash up.

A little later the men went ashore, and strolling aimlessly up and down the road, passed the time in waiting for the ceremony and making sudden dashes after small boys who were throwing at their hats and hitting their heads.

Seabridge itself was quiet, but Mrs. Banks' house was in a state of ferment. Ladies with pins in their mouths wandered about restlessly until, coming into the orbit of one of the brides, they stuck one or two into her and then drew back to behold the effect. Miss Banks in white satin moved about stiffly; Mrs. Church, in heliotrope, glanced restlessly up the road every time she got near the window.

"Now you sit down," said one lady, at length, "both of you. All you've got to do now is to wait for the gentlemen."

It was whispered that Mr. Gibson's delay was due to the fact that he had gone up for Captain Barber, and as time passed a certain restlessness became apparent in the assembly, and sympathetic glances were thrown in the direction of Mrs. Church. Places at the window were at a premium, and several guests went as far as the garden gate and looked up the road. Still no Captain Barber.

"It's time they were here," said Mrs. Banks at last, in a stern voice.

There was a flutter at the gate, and a pretty girl heliographed with her eyes that the parties of the other part were in sight. A minute or two later they came into sight of the window. Captain Barber, clad in beautiful raiment, headed the *cortège*, the rear of which was brought up by the crew of the *Foam* and a cloud of light skirmishers which hovered on

"CAPTAIN BARBER, CLAD IN BEAUTIFUL RAIMENT, HEADED THE CORTÈGE."

their flanks. As they drew near it was noticed that Captain Barber's face was very pale, and his hands trembled, but he entered the house with a firm step and required no assistance.

Of his reception there was never for a moment any doubt. Young matrons smiled and shook their heads at him, middle-aged matrons took him by the hand, while old ladies committed themselves to the statement that they had seen matrimony in his eye for years. He received the full measure accorded to a very distinguished convert, and, taking a chair placed against the wall, surveyed the company with the air of a small boy who has strayed into a hostile alley. A little natural curiosity found vent.

"Now, what first put it into your head to get married?" asked one fair inquirer.

"Mrs. Church," said the ex-mariner, simply.

"Yes, of course," said the matron; "but was it love at first sight, or did it grow on you before you knew it?"

"SOMETHING WAS CLINGING TO HIS ARM."

Captain Barber blushed. "It growed on me afore I knew it," he replied, fervently.

"I suppose," said a lady of a romantic turn of mind, "that you didn't know what was happening at first?"

"I did not, ma'am," agreed the Captain, in trembling tones. "Nobody was more surprised than wot I was."

"How strange," said two or three voices.

They regarded him tenderly, and the youngest bridesmaid, a terrible child of ten, climbed up on his knee and made audible comparisons between the two bridegrooms, which made Mr. Gibson smile.

"Time we started," said Mrs. Banks, raising her voice above the din. "Cap'n Barber, you and Mr. Gibson and the other gentlemen had better get to the church."

The men got up obediently, and in solemn silence formed up in the little passage, and then started for the church some two hundred yards distant, the crew of the *Foam* falling in behind unchallenged.

To this day Captain Barber does not know how he got there, and he resolutely declines to accept Captain Niblett's version as the mere offspring of a disordered imagination. He also denies the truth of a statement circulated in the town that night that, instead of replying to a leading question in the manner plainly laid down in the Church Service, he answered, "I suppose so."

He came out of the church with a buzzing in his ears and a mist before his eyes. Something was clinging to his arm, which he tried several times to shake off. Then he discovered that it was Mrs. Barber.

Of the doings of the crew of the *Foam* that night it were better not to speak. Suffice it to say that when they at length boarded their ship Tim was the only one who still possessed a hat. In a fit of pride at the circumstance, coupled, perhaps, with other reasons, he went to bed in it. He slept but ill, however, and at 4 a.m., the tide being then just on the ebb, the only silk hat left in the forecastle went bobbing up and down on its way to the sea.

XXII.

A FINE October gave way to a damp and dreary November; a month of mists and fogs, in which shipping of all sizes and all nations played blind man's buff at sea, and felt their way, mere voices crying in the wilderness, up and down the river. The *Swallow*, with a soul too large for its body, rammed a first-class battleship off the Medway, and with a thoughtfulness too often lacking at sea, stood by and lowered a boat, whereupon the captain, who had been worrying about his paint, invented, in

his surprise, a brand-new adjective for the use of senior officers of the British Navy.

Over three months had elapsed since the *Golden Cloud* set out on her long voyage; three months during which Fraser, despite his better sense, had been a constant visitor of Poppy Tyrell's, and had assisted her in the search for fresh lodgings to avoid the attentions of Mr. Bob Wheeler, who, having discovered her whereabouts, had chosen to renew his suit.

On two or three occasions the girl had accompanied him on board the steamer, and at such times it was Mr. Green's pleasure to wink in a frenzied manner at Mr. Joe Smith and to make divers bets of pints of beer, which made that thirsty soul half crazy to listen to. He also said that anyone with half an eye could see what was in the wind.

"And a very nice couple they'll make, too," said Joe, solemnly.

"An' what about Cap'n Flower?" suggested Mr. Green; "she's evident the young lady he was talking about that night, and Tommy's heard 'em speaking about him once or twice, too."

Joe shuffled uneasily. He was beginning to entertain a considerable regard for his new skipper, dating from the time he discovered that his sinister suspicions concerning him were unfounded. He had, moreover, conceived a dog-like admiration for Poppy Tyrell.

"That's 'is business," he said, shortly; "judging by what you 'eard in that pub, Cap'n Flower knows where to put 'is hand on one or two more if 'e wants 'em."

He walked off in dudgeon, ignoring a question by Mr. Green as to whose foot kep' the door open, and felt dimly the force of the dictum that no man can serve two masters; and, with a view to saving himself worry, dismissed the matter from his mind until some weeks afterwards it was forcibly revived by the perusal of a newspaper which the engineer had brought on board. Without giving himself time for due reflection, he ran up on deck and approached the skipper.

"*Golden Cloud's* in the paper as overdue, sir," he said, respectfully.

"What is?" inquired Fraser, sharply.

"*Golden Cloud*, sir; boat Cap'n Flower is on," said Joe, slowly.

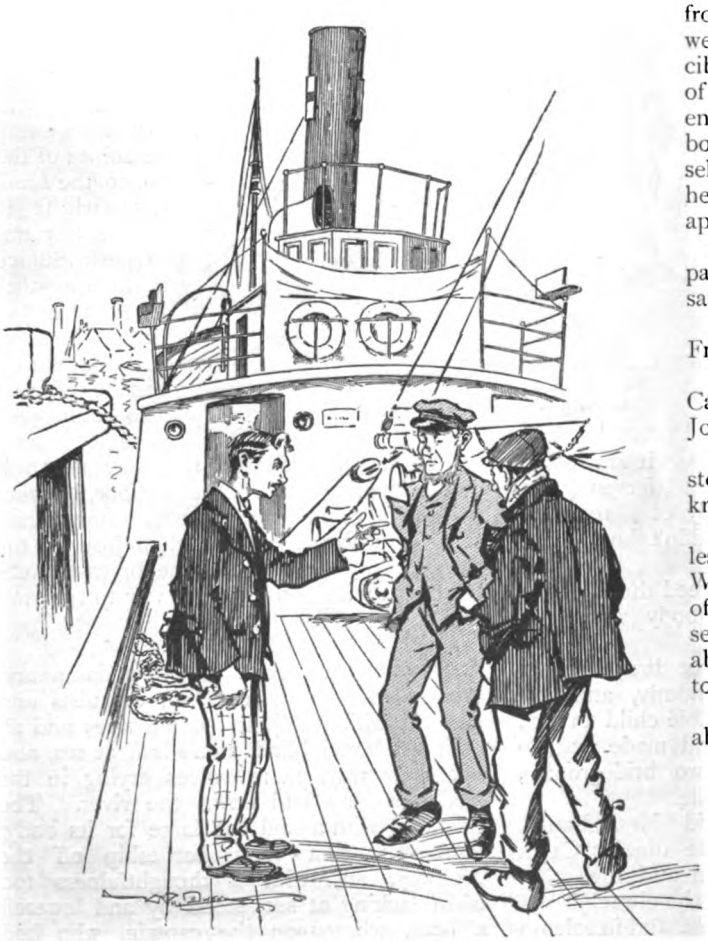
Fraser regarded him sternly. "What do you know about it?" he asked.

Joe looked round, helplessly. At such moments Willyum Green was a tower of strength, but at the present time he was fooling about helping the ship's cat to wash itself.

"What do you know about it?" repeated Fraser.

"Willyum told me, sir," said Joe, hastily.

Mr. Green being summoned, hastily put down the cat and came aft, while Joe, with a full confidence in his friend's powers, edged



"'AN' WHAT ABOUT CAP'N FLOWER?' SUGGESTED MR. GREEN."

a few feet away and listened expectantly as the skipper interrogated him.

"Yes, sir, I did tell Joe, sir," he answered, with a reproachful glance at that amateur. "I met Cap'n Flower that evening again, late, an' he told me himself. I'm sorry to see by this morning's paper that his ship is overdue."

"That'll do," said Fraser, turning away.

The men moved off slowly, Mr. Green's reproaches being forestalled by the evidently genuine compliments of Joe.

"If I'd got a 'ead like you, Willyum," he said, enviously, "I'd be a loryer or a serlicitor, or somethink o' the kind."

Days passed and ran into weeks, but the *Golden Cloud* was still unspoken. Fraser got a paper every day when ashore, but in vain, until at length one morning, at Bittlesea, in the news columns of the *Daily Telegraph*, the name of the missing ship caught his eye. He folded the paper hurriedly, and breathed hard as he read:—

"Missing ship, *Golden Cloud*.

"Rio Janeiro, Thursday.

"The barque *Foxglove*, from Melbourne to Rio Janeiro, has just arrived with five men, sole survivors of the ship *Golden Cloud*, which they report as sunk in collision with a steamer, name unknown, ten weeks out from London. Their names are Smith, Larsen, Petersen, Collins, and Gooch. No others saved."

In a dazed fashion he read the paragraph over and over again, closely scanning the names of the rescued men. Then he went up on deck, and, beckoning to Joe, pointed with a trembling finger to the fatal paragraph. Joe read it slowly.

"And Cap'n Flower wasn't one o' them, sir?" he asked, pointing to the names.

Fraser shook his head, and both men stood for some time in silence.

"He's done it this time, and no mistake," said Joe, at last. "Well, 'e was a good sailorman and a kind master."

He handed the paper back, and returned to his work and to confer in a low voice with Green, who had been watching them. Fraser went back to the cabin, and after sitting for some time in a brown study, wrote off to Poppy Tyrell and inclosed the cutting.

He saw her three days later, and was dismayed and surprised to find her taxing herself with being the cause of the adventurous mariner's death.

"JOE READ IT SLOWLY."

"He would never have heard of the *Golden Cloud* if it hadn't been for me," she said, trembling. "His death is at my door."

Fraser tried to comfort her, and straining metaphor to the utmost, said that if the finger of Providence had not made her oversleep herself she would undoubtedly have shared the same fate.

The girl shook her head.

"He shipped before the mast for the sake of being on the same ship as I was," she said, with quivering lip; "it is not every man who would have done that, and I—I—— "

"Overslept yourself," said Fraser, consolingly.

Miss Tyrell made an impatient gesture, but listened hopefully as her visitor suggested that it was quite possible Flower nad got away in another boat.

"I'll watch the paper every day," she said, brightening; "you miss some at sea."

But nothing came of the watching. The *Golden Cloud* had had its obituary in the paper in large type, and that was all—a notice to certain women and children scattered about Europe to go into mourning, and to the owners to get another ship.

By the end of a couple of months Fraser had given up all hope. He was very sorry for his unfortunate friend, but his sorrow was at times almost tempered by envy as he pondered over the unexpected change which had come over his relations with Poppy Tyrell. The old friendly footing had disappeared, and her manner had become distant as though, now that the only link which connected them was broken, there was no need for further intercourse. The stiffness which ensued made his visits more and more difficult. At last he missed calling one night when he was in London, and the next time he called the girl was out. It was a fortnight before he saw her, and the meeting was embarrassing to both.

"I'm sorry I was out last time you came," said Poppy.

"It didn't matter," said Fraser.

Conversation came to a standstill. Miss Tyrell with her toes on the fender gazed in a contemplative fashion at the fire. "I didn't know——" began Fraser, who was still standing.

He cleared his voice and began again. "I didn't know whether you would rather I left off coming," he said, slowly.

Her gaze travelled slowly from the fire to his face. "You must please yourself," she said, quietly.

"I would rather please you," he said, steadily.

The girl regarded him gravely. "It is rather inconvenient for you sometimes," she suggested, "and I am afraid that I am not very good company."

Fraser shook his head eagerly. "It is not that at all," he said, hastily.

Poppy made no reply, and there was another long silence. Then Fraser advanced and held out his hand.

"Good-bye," he said, quietly.

"Good-bye," said the girl. She smiled brightly, and got up to see him downstairs.

"I wanted to say something before I went," said Fraser, slowly, as he paused at the street-door, "and I will say it."

Miss Tyrell, raising her eyebrows somewhat at his vehemence, waited patiently.

"I have loved you from the moment I saw you," said Fraser, "and I shall go on loving you till I die. Good-bye."

He pressed her hand again, and walked down the little front garden into the street. At the gate he paused and looked round at Poppy still standing in the lighted doorway; he looked round again a few yards down the street, and again farther on. The girl still stood there; in the momentary glimpse he had of her he fancied that her arm moved. He came back hastily, and Miss Tyrell regarded him with unmistakable surprise.

"I thought—you beckoned me," he stammered.

"Thought I beckoned you?" repeated the girl.

"I thought so," murmured Fraser. "I beg your pardon," and turned confusedly to go again.

"So—I—did," said a low voice.

Fraser turned suddenly and faced her; then, as the girl lowered her eyes before his, he re-entered the house, and closing the door led her gently upstairs.

"I didn't like you to go like that," said Miss Tyrell, in explanation, as they entered her room.

Fraser regarded her steadfastly, and her eyes smiled at him. He drew her towards him and kissed her, and Miss Tyrell, trembling with something which might have been indignation, hid her face on his shoulder.

For a long time, unless certain foolish ejaculations of Fraser's might count as conversation, they stood silent; then Poppy, extricating herself from his arm, drew back and regarded him seriously.

"It is not right," she said, slowly; "you forget."

"It is quite right," said Fraser; "it is as right as anything can be."

Poppy shook her head. "It has been wrong all along," she said, soberly, "and Captain Flower is dead in consequence. I never intended to go on the *Golden Cloud*, but I let him go. And now he's dead. He only went to be near me, and while he was drowning I was going out with you. I have been very wicked."

Fraser protested, and, taking her hand, drew her gently towards him again.

"He was very good to my father," said

Poppy, struggling faintly. "I don't think I can."

"You must," said Fraser, doggedly; "I'm not going to lose you now. It is no good looking at me like that. It is too late."

He kissed her again, secretly astonished at his own audacity and the high-handed way in which he was conducting things. Mixed with his joy was a half-pang, as he realized that he had lost his fear of Poppy Tyrell.

"I promised my father," said the girl, presently. "I did not want to get married, but I did not mind so much until——"

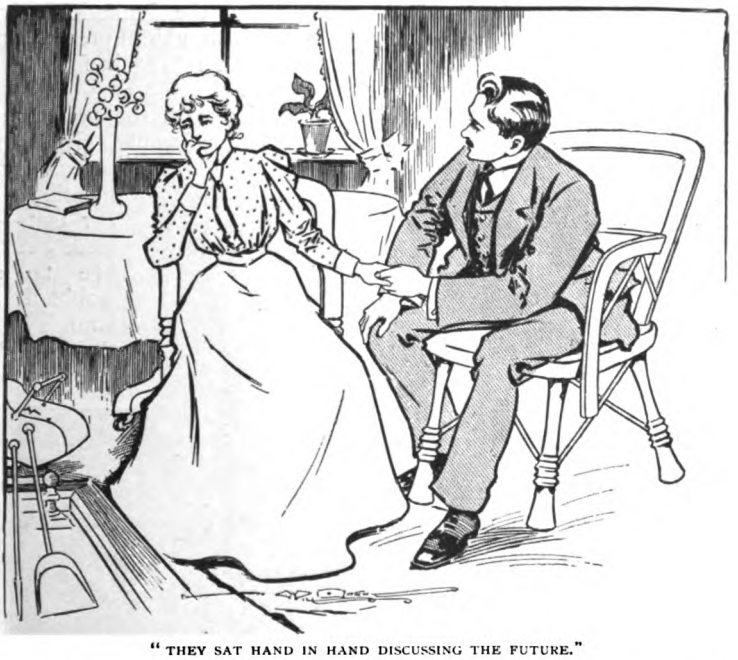
"Until," Fraser reminded her, fondly.

"Until it began to get near," said the girl; "then I knew."

She took her chair by the fire again, and Fraser, placing his beside it, they sat hand in hand discussing the future. It was a comprehensive future, and even included Captain Flower.

"If he should be alive, after all," said Poppy, with unmistakable firmness, "I shall still marry him if he wishes it."

Fraser assented. "If he should ever turn up again," he said, deliberately, "I will tell him all about it. But it was his own desire that I should watch over you if anything happened to him, so he is as much to blame as I am. If he had lived I should never have said a word to you. You know that."



"THEY SAT HAND IN HAND DISCUSSING THE FUTURE."

"I know," said Poppy, softly.

Her hand trembled in his, and his grasp tightened as though nothing should loosen it; but some thousands of miles away Captain Flower, from the deck of a whaler, was anxiously scanning the horizon in search of the sail which was to convey him back to England.

(To be continued.)

A Musical Curiosity; or, An Automaton Orchestra.

By M. Dinorben Griffith.

(Illustrated from Photographs specially taken by George Newnes, Limited.)

IT was a foggy morning — no need to specify any particular morning, for every morning was foggy then — when in a lift I ascended to the top floor of a lofty building situated — well, within the four-mile radius of Charing Cross.

The blood-curdling sounds of half-a-dozen stringed instruments being tuned at once guided me to my destination. I entered a large room, where I found an orchestra of eleven ladies, in full evening dress of white satin, with pearl and diamond ornaments, and hair elaborately *coiffé*, instruments in hand, grouped round an organ on which a twelfth figure (a man) was playing a dreamy prelude.

THE ORCHESTRA.

Eleven pairs of eyes—blue, grey, brown, and hazel—were fixed on me as I nervously covered the space between the door and the one chair in front of the owners of the eyes. I tried to summon up courage to stare the starers out of countenance, and to pick out the pretty ones. They were all pretty, but naturally one has predilections for lovely, demure-looking, golden-haired blondes, or stately brunettes with dark tresses, or for sparkling beauties, wickedly bewitching, with Titian-hued hair. Samples of each type were before me. I hesitated and was lost, and, to save making an invidious selection, fell in love with the whole eleven.

The prelude ended with a loud chord. The lady seated straight before me jumped up, bowed smilingly, then unceremoniously turned her back to me and lifted up her *bâton*. To my great chagrin the ten pairs of eyes were then fixed on her, and the concert began with the "American Patrol." It was given with wonderful precision and brilliancy. The conductress again faced me, bowed, and sat down.

A voice from the organ announced that "Miss Blow would give a solo on the piccolo," and the lady mentioned struggled to her feet — I say struggled, but truth compels me to state she wobbled about in a strange fashion. "Ah, the cold," I thought, "or perhaps she has breakfasted, not wisely, but too well." I smiled sympathetically at her, but was frozen by a stony glare, after which I sat shamedly listening to one of the finest solos I ever heard played, and felt bound to confess that whatever had affected the limbs had left the head and fingers in first-class condition, so I named the complaint chilblains and tight shoes.

The orchestra then played "Pastimes on the Mississippi," which gave scope to the talent of the metalophone player, who acquitted herself with wonderful skill.

DR. BRUCE MILLER AND THE CONDUCTRESS.

I clapped vigorously to express my delight and also to warm my hands, and then with some diffidence and downcast eyes threaded my way among the ladies until I reached the organist.

"Dr. Bruce Miller, is it not?" I asked.

"So. What do think of my orchestra? We are *en route* for the Paris Exhibition, you know. It's a first-rate show to travel with. You bet there are never any rows in my company, and no single member has ever grumbled or struck for higher salary. That's good enough, isn't it? And all women, too —stranger still, eh?

"To bring this orchestra up to its present state of perfection," added Dr. Miller, "has taken ten years of my life, and I am still going on improving it. I shall very shortly dispense with the organ altogether, and have a piano with a harp attachment."

I had just realized that the eleven ladies were ruled by one mind and one brain, and those belonged to the man who was their creator and manager.

I had been listening to a musical curiosity —an automaton orchestra, but so cleverly manipulated and so artistically built, that at a distance and under artificial light they would deceive anyone.

The construction of automata has been a craze among mechanicians from time immemorial. The priests of Memphis kept up the prestige of their sacred city and its religious rites through their mechanical skill in this special line. Four hundred years B.C. there was the famous wooden flying pigeon of Sarentum, and centuries later came the historic eagle which flew before the Emperor Maximilian when he entered Nuremberg. Probably the best known of these automata was Kempelen's famous chess-player, which for many years puzzled Europe. It was hardly deserving of the name of automaton, for a man was cleverly concealed inside the figure. The Swiss excel in constructing automatic singing and flying birds, but their productions can hardly be termed more than clever toys.

Mechanism has now attained such perfection that a mother can present her daughter with a doll which will walk, sing hymns, nursery rhymes, or lullabies in the mother's own voice. So cleverly are animals imitated, that even an experienced old tabby cat was grievously deceived. Seeing a mouse leisurely meandering round the room, she swallowed it. Alas, it was only a toy mouse, and whenever that cat moved there was a rumble of machinery inside her. She was a living alarm clock, avoided by all her kind, and the laughing-stock of mice. History records that she died mad.

Most automata are constructed on the winding-up principle; the orchestra men-

THE CLARIONET PLAYER.

tioned is manipulated in a much more intricate but more natural manner.

Doctor Bruce Miller, its inventor, is a Chicago physician, who in his early youth was a musical enthusiast. He devoted his whole energies to the study of this branch of art, and also to the practical constructive part, with such an absorbing interest and devotion that his brain threatened to give way. His father forbade any further pursuit of his hobby, and insisted on his entering the College of Physicians and Surgeons as a student. He graduated, and successfully followed his profession for three years, although his heart was not in his work. Gradually he returned to his first love, music, not as a student or performer, but as an inventor.

THE FLUTE-PLAYER.

His first attempt at automata construction was eight grotesque figures that sang and played their own accompaniments. The second was the present Pneumatic Orchestra of eleven life-size figures, which cost the Doctor ten years of constant labour, and before it had reached its present state of perfection over £3,000 had been expended in experimenting.

The operating instrument is a console, and Dr. Miller, seated before the finger-boards, foot-pedals, stops, etc., directs all the movements of the figures. The instruments played are violin, clarionet, piccolo, flute, trombone, metalophone, bass viol, cymbals, triangle, bass and snare drum. Every figure, as it was completed, was connected with the console by pneumatic tubings.

The figures are made of *papier-maché*, as wax did not look natural, and the inventor himself constructed every one, painted the faces, and completed the mechanism which moves the heads, arms, and eyes of the figures. Some idea of the magnitude of the work may be gathered from the fact that over a mile and a half of rubber tubing is used, in addition to brass and tin tubes, 3,000 bellows, and 6,500 valves.

"The instruments," said Dr. Miller, in reply to a question, "cost about £150, but it costs ten times as much to make those instruments play."

The marvellous part of this automaton or Pneumatic Orchestra is, that the figures move, the eyes turn, the fingers are flexible, and actually play the right notes on flute, piccolo, or clarionet. They stand up and sit down, and play solos with an accuracy and light and shade which have hitherto been impossible except to a living soloist.

Naturally the excellence of the programme depends upon the talent of the operator and his musical repertoire and skill. If he is a genius, then his musicians are immediately filled with the divine afflatus also. This is literally true, for the operator has only to open the proper valves, and the figures do the rest.

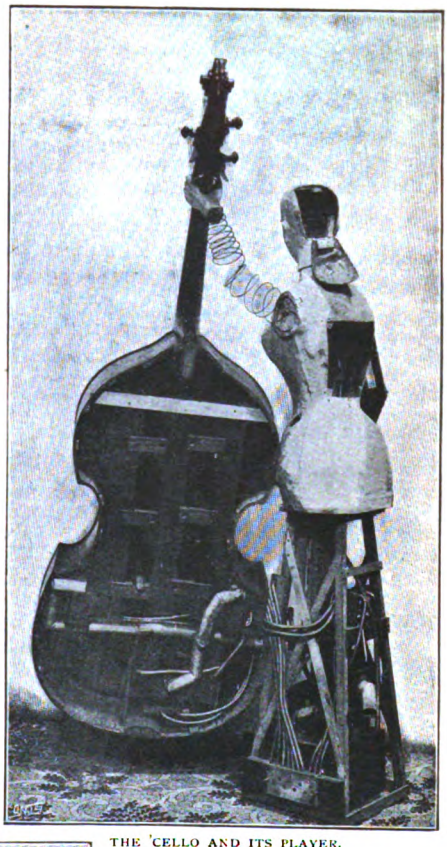
THE PERFORMER ON THE KETTLE-DRUM.

The leader of such an orchestra has to be a thorough musician himself; he must know the whole orchestration of a piece, and commit every one to memory, for to manipulate correctly the tubes connecting each and every figure requires long, arduous, and constant practice.

The orchestra occupies a space of 25ft. in length, is 12ft. wide, 12½ft. in height, and weighs 3,500lb.

The Doctor, seated at the console with his

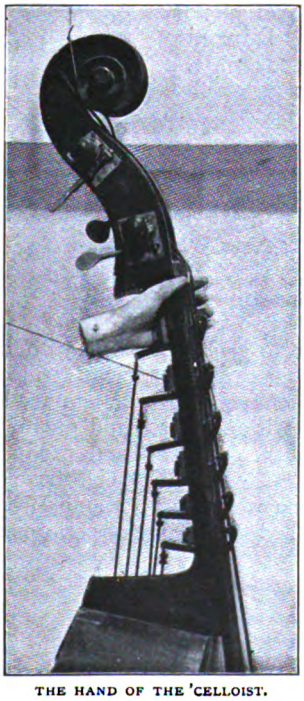
THE VIOLINIST, AS SHE REALLY IS.



THE 'CELLO AND ITS PLAYER.

orchestra round him, begins the overture, at the conclusion of which the conductress starts leading the band. At will the musician at the organ can bring a soloist to her feet, who faultlessly plays her piece, bows, and sits down again. The marvel of it all is that the inventor, among his multitudinous tubes, can recollect what tubes move any particular figure, for tubes surround him, in hanks, in bunches, until the floor round him is covered and seems to teem with snakes, which they resemble.

As the whole manipulation is performed by one man, and he an accomplished musician, there is no difficulty in getting the proper expression into the music,



THE HAND OF THE 'CELLOIST.

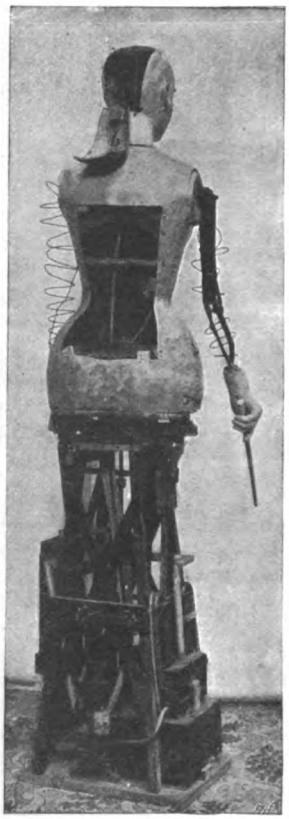
which is an impossibility in a mere wound-up automaton.

The metalophone player, Dr. Miller informed me, was the most complicated. The figure contains fifty bellows, and seventy-five more are required in connections before the soloist can play her part thoroughly.

Questioned as to the motive-power, Dr. Miller pointed to twelve tanks containing about 600lb. of water. "You see," he said, "this is better than lead for weight. I can empty the tanks for transport, and that means something, as I paid for fifteen tons of luggage by measurement coming over from America."

"Will not your invention injure professional players?"

"Not at all, when I have



THE CONDUCTRESS.

brought my orchestra to the highest state of perfection possible; the musician-operator will still be necessary, and the excellence of the orchestra will depend upon his ability."

In addition to the finger-board Dr. Miller operates on twenty-six pedals with his feet; a harmonica, by a contrivance of wires, is fixed conveniently to his mouth, and this again is connected with the figures by tubes; every tube in the harmonica produces two notes by the simple process of blowing and suction. The Doctor is the champion harmonica player of the United States, hence without seeming difficulty he is able to accomplish a musical feat that would be impossible to anyone else.

A glance at the mechanism of the figures and the interior of the instruments, with their connecting tubes—as given in our illustrations—will show how difficult is the task of the operator.

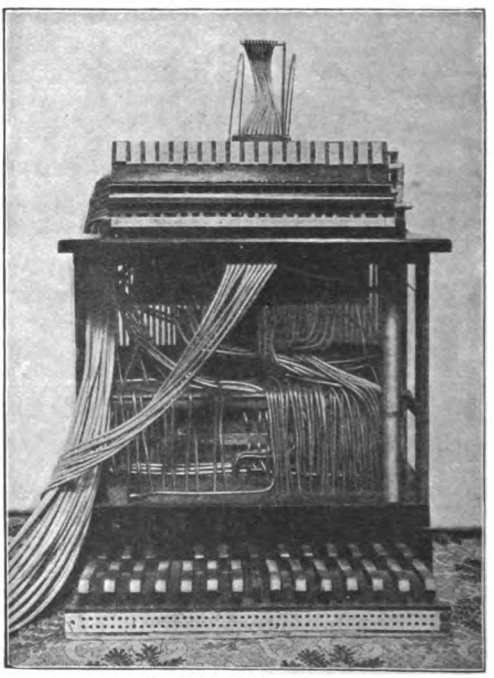
To remember the order of the tubes, to play with hands, feet, and mouth, to regulate the movement of the figures, and to give the necessary expression to the music seems to be a task beyond the power of one man to accomplish, but to Dr. Miller it is a labour of love, and one he performs with the greatest ease.

It was a transformation scene when the pretty ladies were ruthlessly robbed of their wigs and garments to show their interior mechanism. Through a trap-door at the back of the head, and another larger one in the body, I saw the minute bellows, with their double action, the marvellous springs, and the thousand and one devices that converted the *papier-maché* doll into an accomplished soloist. The orchestra is certain to be an attractive and much-patronized feature of the Paris Exhibition.

"The ladies are all to have new dresses for that occasion," said the Doctor. "I am busy designing a novel costume for them."

"Why not have them in Jap dress?" I suggested.

"That would not be a bad idea," was the reply. "I am now adding a piano of concert



THE BACK OF THE ORGAN.

size, with harp and mandoline attachments, which will be operated from my finger-board in connection with the figures. This will add greatly to the volume of the orchestra and produce a number of new effects. I shall have this completed by the 1st of March, from which date we start a series of performances in London."

The Cockatoucan; or, Great-Aunt Willoughby.

A Story for Children.

By E. Nesbit.

MATILDA'S ears were red and shiny. So were her cheeks. Her hands were red, too. This was because Pridmore had washed her. It was not the usual washing, which makes you clean and comfortable, but the "thorough good wash," which makes you burn and smart till you wish you could be like the poor little savages who do not know anything and run about bare in the sun, and only go into the water when they are hot.

Matilda wished she could have been born in a savage tribe, instead of in Brixton.

"Little savages," she said, "don't have their ears washed thoroughly, and they don't have new dresses that are prickly in the insides round their arms and cut them round the neck, do they, Pridmore?"

But Pridmore only said, "Stuff and nonsense"; and then she said: "Don't wriggle so, child, for goodness' sake." Pridmore was Matilda's nursemaid, and Matilda sometimes found her trying.

Matilda was quite right in believing that savage children do not wear frocks that hurt. It is also true that savage children are not overwashed, overbrushed, overcombed, gloved, booted, and hatted, and taken in an omnibus to Streatham to see their Great-Aunt Willoughby. This was intended to be Matilda's fate. Her mother had arranged it. Pridmore had prepared her for it. Matilda, knowing resistance to be vain, had submitted to it.

"SHE SWUNG HER LEGS MISERABLY."

But Destiny had not been consulted. And Destiny had plans of its own for Matilda.

When the last button of Matilda's boots had been fastened (the button-hook always had a nasty temper, especially when it was hurried—and that day it bit a little piece of Matilda's leg quite spitefully), the wretched child was taken downstairs and put on a chair in the hall, to wait while Pridmore popped her own things on.

"I sha'n't be a minute," said Pridmore. Matilda knew better. She settled herself to wait, and swung her legs miserably. She had been to her Great-Aunt Willoughby's before, and she knew exactly what to expect. She would be asked about her lessons, and how many marks she had, and whether she had been a good girl. I can't think why grown-up people don't see how impertinent these questions are. Suppose you were to answer:—

"I'm top of my class, auntie, thank you, and I am very good. And now let us have a little talk about you, aunt, dear. How much money have you got, and have you been scolding the servants again, or have you tried to be good and patient, as a properly brought up aunt should be, eh, dear?"

Try this method with one of your aunts next time she begins asking you questions, and write and tell me what she says.

Matilda knew exactly what Aunt Willoughby's questions would be, and she knew how, when they were answered, her aunt would give her a small biscuit with caraway

seeds in it, and then tell her to go with Pridmore and have her hands and face washed. Again!

Then she would be sent to walk in the garden; the garden had a gritty path, and geraniums and calceolarias and lobelias in the beds. You might not pick anything. There would be minced veal for dinner, with three-cornered bits of toast round the dish; and a tapioca pudding. Then the long afternoon, with a book, a bound volume of "The Potterer's Saturday Night," nasty small print, and all the stories about children who died young because they were too good for this world.

Matilda wriggled wretchedly. If she had been a little less uncomfortable she would have cried—but her new frock was too tight and prickly to let her forget it for a moment, even in tears.

When Pridmore came down at last she said, "Fie for shame, what a sulky face."

And Matilda said, "I'm not."

"Oh, yes, you are," said Pridmore—"you know you are—you don't appreciate your blessings."

"I wish it was *your* Aunt Willoughby," said Matilda.

"Nasty spiteful little thing," said Pridmore, and she shook Matilda.

Then Matilda tried to slap Pridmore, and the two went down the steps not at all pleased with each other.

They walked down the dull road to the dull omnibus, and Matilda was crying a little.

Now, Pridmore was a very careful person, though cross; but even the most careful persons make mistakes sometimes, and she must have taken the wrong omnibus or this story could never have happened, and where should we all have been then? This shows you that even mistakes are sometimes valuable, so do not be hard on grown-up people if they are wrong sometimes. You know, after all, it hardly ever happens.

It was a very bright green and gold omnibus, and inside the cushions were green and very soft. Matilda and her nursemaid had it all to themselves, and Matilda began to feel more comfortable, especially as she had wriggled till she had burst one of her shoulder seams and got more room for herself inside her frock.

So she said: "I'm sorry if I was cross, Priddy, dear."

Pridmore said: "So you ought to be"; but she never said *she* was sorry for being cross, but you must not expect grown-up people to say that.

It was certainly the wrong omnibus—because instead of jolting slowly along dusty streets, it went quickly and smoothly down a green lane, with flowers in the hedges and green trees overhead. Matilda was so delighted that she sat quite still, a very rare thing with her. Pridmore was reading a penny story, called "The Vengeance of the Lady Constantia," so she did not notice anything.

"I don't care. I sha'n't tell her," said Matilda. "She'd stop the 'bus as likely as not."

At last the 'bus stopped of its own accord. Pridmore put her story in her pocket and began to get out.

"Well, I never," she said, and got out very quickly and ran round to where the horses were. There were four of them. They were white horses with green harness, and their tails were very long indeed.

"Hi, young man," said Pridmore, to the omnibus driver, "you've brought us to the wrong place. This isn't Streatham Common, this isn't."

The driver was the most beautiful omnibus driver you ever saw. And his clothes were like him in beauty. He had white silk stockings and a ruffled silk shirt of white—and his coat and breeches were green and gold, so was the three-cornered hat which he lifted very politely when Pridmore spoke to him.

"I fear," he said, kindly, "that you must have taken, by some unfortunate misunderstanding, the wrong omnibus!"

"When does the next go back?"

"The omnibus does not go back. It runs from Brixton here once a month, but it doesn't go back."

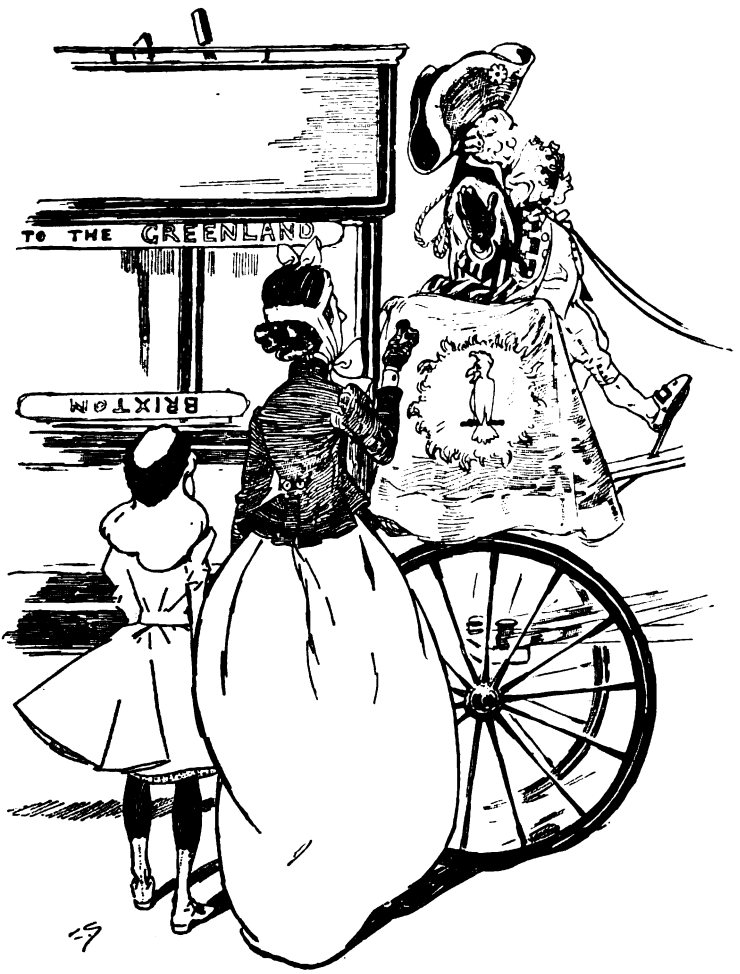
"But how does it get to Brixton again—to start again, I mean?" asked Matilda.

"We start a new one every time," said the driver, raising his three-cornered hat once more.

"And what becomes of the old ones?" Matilda asked.

"Ah," said the driver, smiling, "that depends. One never knows beforehand, and things change so suddenly nowadays. Good morning. Thank you so much for your patronage. No — no — on no account, madam." He waved away the eightpence which Pridmore was trying to offer him for the fare from Brixton, and drove quickly off.

Then they looked round them. No—this was certainly *not* Streatham Common. The wrong omnibus had brought them to a strange village—the neatest, sweetest, reddest,



"HE WAVED AWAY THE EIGHTPENCE."

greenest, cleanest, prettiest village in the world. The houses were grouped round a village green, on which children in pretty loose frocks or smocks were playing happily. Not a tight armhole was to be seen, or even imagined, in that happy spot. Matilda swelled herself out and burst three hooks and a bit more of the shoulder seam.

The shops seemed a little queer, Matilda thought. The names somehow did not match the things that were to be sold. For instance, where it said "Elias Grimes, tinsmith," there were loaves and buns in the window; and the shop that had "Baker" over the door was full of perambulators; the grocer and the wheelwright seemed to have changed names, or shops, or something; and Miss Scrimpling, dressmaker and milliner, had her shop window full of pork and sausage-meat.

"What a funny, nice place," said Matilda. "I *am* glad we took the wrong omnibus."

A little boy in a yellow smock had come up close to them.

"I beg your pardon," he said, very politely, "but all strangers are brought before the King at once. Please follow me."

"Well, of all the impudence!" said Pridmore. "Strangers, indeed! And who may you be, I should like to know?"

"I," said the little boy, bowing very low, "am the Prime Minister. I know I do not look it, but appearances are deceitful. It's only for a short time; I shall probably be myself again by to-morrow."

Pridmore muttered something which the little boy did not hear. Matilda caught a few words, "smacked," "bed," "bread and water" — familiar words, all of them.

"If it's a game," said Matilda to the boy, "I should like to play."

He frowned. "I advise you to come at once," he said, so sternly, that even Pridmore was a little frightened. "His Majesty's palace is in this direction." He walked away, and Matilda made a sudden jump—dragged her hand out of Pridmore's, and ran after him. So Pridmore had to follow, still grumbling.

The palace stood in a great green park, dotted with white-flowered may-bushes. It was not at all like an English palace—St. James's or Buckingham Palace, for instance—because it was very beautiful and very clean. When they got in they saw that the palace was hung with green silk and the footmen had green and gold liveries, and all the courtiers' clothes were the same colours.

Matilda and Pridmore had to wait a few

moments while the King changed his sceptre and put on a clean crown, and then they were shown into the audience-chamber. The King came to meet them.

"It *is* kind of you to have come so far," he said. "Of *course* you'll stay at the palace?" He looked anxiously at Matilda.

"Are you *quite* comfortable, my dear?" he asked, doubtfully.

Matilda was very truthful, for a girl.

"No," she said, "my frock cuts me round the arms."

"Ah," said he, "and you brought no luggage. Some of the Princess's frocks—her old ones perhaps. Yes, yes; this person—your maid, no doubt."

"SHE SAW AN AWFUL CHANGE TAKING PLACE IN PRIDMORE."

A loud laugh rang suddenly through the hall. The King looked uneasily round as though he expected something to happen. But nothing seemed likely to occur.

"Yes," said Matilda; "Pridmore is. . . . Oh, dear."

For before her eyes she saw an awful change taking place in Pridmore. In an instant all that was left of the original Pridmore were the boots and the hem of her skirt—the top part of her had changed into painted iron and glass, and, even as Matilda looked, the bit of skirt that was left got flat and hard and square, the two feet turned into four feet, and they were iron feet, and there was no more Pridmore.

"Oh, my poor child," said the King; "your maid has turned into an Automatic Machine."

It was too true. The maid had turned into a machine such as those which you see in railway stations—greedy, grasping things, which take your pennies and give you back next to nothing in chocolate, and no change.

But there was no chocolate to be seen through the glass of the machine that once had been Pridmore. Only little rolls of paper.

The King silently handed some pennies to Matilda.

She dropped one into the machine and pulled out the little drawer. There was a scroll of paper. Matilda opened it and read:—

"Don't be tiresome."

She tried again. This time it was:—

"If you don't give over I'll tell your ma first thing when she comes home."

The next was:—

"Go along with you, do—always worrying."

So then Matilda *knew*.

"Yes," said the King, sadly; "I fear there's no doubt about it. Your maid has turned into an Automatic Nagging Machine. Never mind, my dear. She'll be all right to-morrow."

"I like her best like this, thank you," said Matilda, quickly; "I needn't put in any more pennies, you see."

"Oh! we mustn't be unkind and neglectful," said the King, gently, and he dropped in a penny himself. *He* got:—

"You tiresome boy, you. Leave me be this minute."

"I can't help it then," said the King, wearily; "you've no idea how suddenly things change here. It's because—but I'll tell you all about it at tea. Go with nurse now, my dear, and see if any of the Princess's frocks will fit you."

Then a nice, kind, cuddly nurse led Matilda away to the Princess's apartments, and took off the stiff frock that hurt, and put on a green silk gown as soft as birds' breasts, and Matilda kissed her for sheer joy at being so comfortable.

"And now, dearie," said the nurse, "you'd like to see the Princess, wouldn't you? Take care you don't hurt yourself with her. She's rather sharp."

Matilda did not understand this then. Afterwards she did.

The nurse took her through many marble corridors and up and down many marble steps, and at last they came to a garden full of white roses, and in the middle of it, on a green satin-covered eiderdown pillow as big as a feather bed, sat the Princess in a white gown.

She got up when Matilda came towards her, and it was like seeing a yard and a half of white tape stand up on one end and bow—a yard and a half of broad white tape, of course; but what is considered broad for tape is very narrow indeed for Princesses.

"How are you?" said Matilda, who had been taught manners.

"Very thin indeed, thank you," said the Princess. And she was. Her face was so white and thin that it looked as though it were made of oyster shell. Her hands were thin and white, and her fingers reminded Matilda of fish-bones. Her hair and eyes were black, and Matilda thought she might have been pretty if she had been fatter. When she shook hands with Matilda her bony hand hurt, quite hard.

The Princess seemed pleased to see her visitor, and invited her to sit with Her Highness on the satin cushion.

"I have to be very careful, or I should break," said she; "that's why the cushion's so soft, and I can't play many games for fear of accidents. Do you know any sitting-down games?"

The only thing Matilda could think of was "cat's cradle." So they played that with the Princess's green hair-ribbon. Her fish-bony fingers were much cleverer at it than Matilda's little fat pink paws.

Matilda looked about her between the games and admired everything very much, and asked questions, of course. There was a very large bird chained to a perch in the middle of a very large cage. Indeed, the cage was so big that it took up all one side of the rose garden. The bird had a yellow crest like a cockatoo, and a very large bill like a toucan (if you don't know what a toucan is you do not deserve ever to go to the Zoological Gardens again).

"What is that bird?" asked Matilda.

"Oh," said the Princess, "that's my pet Cockatoucan. He's very valuable. If he were to die or be stolen the Green Land would wither up and be like New Cross or Islington."

"How horrible," said Matilda, trembling.

"I've never been to those places, of course," said the Princess, shuddering, "but I hope I know my geography."

"All of it?" asked Matilda.

"Even the exports and imports," said the Princess. "Good-bye. I'm so thin I have to rest a good deal, or I should wear myself out. Nurse—take her away."

So nurse took her away to a wonderful room, where she amused herself till tea-time with all the kinds of toys that you see and want in the shops when someone is buying you a box of bricks or a puzzle map—the kind of toys you never get because they are so expensive.

Matilda had tea with the King. He was full of true politeness, and treated Matilda exactly as though she had been grown up; so that she was extremely happy and behaved beautifully.

The King told her all his troubles.

"You see," he began, "what a pretty place my Green Land was once. It has points even now; but things aren't what they used to be. It's that bird; that Cockatoucan. We daren't kill it or give it away, and every time it laughs something changes.

Look at my Prime Minister. He was a six-foot man—and look at him now. I could lift him with one hand; and then your poor maid. It's all that bad bird."

"Why *does* it laugh?" asked Matilda.

"I can't think," said the King. "*I* don't see anything to laugh at."

"Can't you give it lessons or something nasty to make it miserable?"

"I have. I do. I assure you, my dear child, the lessons that bird has to swallow would choke a professor."

"Does it eat anything besides lessons?"

"Christmas pudding. But, there — what's the use of talking? That bird would laugh if it were fed on dog-biscuits and senna-tea."

His Majesty sighed and passed the buttered toast.

"You can't possibly," he went on, "have any idea of the kind of things that happen. The bird laughed one day at a Cabinet Council, and all my Ministers turned into little boys in yellow smocks. And we can't get any laws made till they come right again. It's not their fault—and I must keep their situations open for them, of course, poor things."

"Of course," said Matilda.

"There was the dragon, now," said the King. "When he came I offered the Princess's hand and half my kingdom to anyone who would kill him; it's an offer that's always made, you know."

"Yes," said Matilda.

"THE PRINCESS.

"Well—a really respectable young Prince came along—and everyone turned out to see him fight the dragon; as much as ninepence each was paid for the front seats, I assure you, and the trumpets sounded, and the dragon came hurrying up. A trumpet is like a dinner-bell to a dragon, you know. And the Prince drew his bright sword, and we all shouted, and then that wretched bird laughed, and the dragon turned into a pussy cat, and the Prince killed it before he could stop himself. The populace was furious."

"What happened then?" asked Matilda.

"Well, I did what I could. I said, 'You shall marry the Princess, just the same.' So I brought the Prince home, and when we got there the Cockatoucan had just been laughing again, and the Princess had turned into a very old German governess. The Prince went home in a great hurry and an awful temper. The Princess was all right in a day or two. These are trying times, my dear."

"I am *so* sorry for you," said Matilda, going on with the preserved ginger.

"Well you may be," said the miserable monarch. "Why, if I were to try to tell you all that that bird has brought on my poor kingdom I should keep you up till long past your proper bed-time."

"*I* don't mind," said Matilda, kindly. "Do tell me some more."

"Why," the King went on, growing more

and more agitated. "Why—at one titter from that revolting bird the long row of ancestors on my palace wall grew red-faced and vulgar; they began to drop their H's and to assert that their name was Smith, from Clapham Junction."

"How dreadful!"

"And once," the King went on, in a whisper, "it laughed so loudly that two Sundays came together, and next Thursday got lost and went prowling away and hid itself on the other side of Christmas. And now," he said, suddenly, "it's bed-time."

"Must I go?" asked Matilda.

"Yes, please," said the King. "I tell all strangers this tragic story because I always feel that perhaps some *stranger* might be clever enough to help me. You seem a very nice little girl: do you think *you* are clever?"

It is very nice even to be *asked* if you're clever. Your Aunt Willoughby knows well enough that you're not. But Kings do say nice things. Matilda was very pleased.

"I don't *think* I'm clever," she was saying, quite honestly, when suddenly the sound of a hoarse laugh rang through the banqueting-hall. Matilda put her hands to her head.

"Oh, dear," she cried, "I feel so different! Oh, wait a minute! Oh, whatever is it? Oh!"

She was silent for a moment. Then she looked at the King and said: "I was wrong, your Majesty. I *am* clever, and I know it is not good for me to sit up late. Good-night. Thank you so much for your nice party. In the morning I think I shall be clever enough to help you, unless the bird laughs me back into the other kind of Matilda."

But in the morning Matilda's head still felt strangely clear. Only, when she came down to breakfast, full of plans for helping the King, she found that the Cockatoucan must have laughed in the night, for the beautiful palace had turned into a butcher's shop, and the King, who was too wise to fight against fate, had tucked up his Royal robes, and was busy in the shop weighing out six ounces of the best mutton chops for a charwoman with a basket.

"I don't know how ever you can help me now," he said, despairing. "As long as the palace stays like this, it's no use trying to go on with being a King, or anything. I can only try to be a good butcher, and you shall keep the shop accounts, if you like, till that bird laughs me back into my palace again."

So the King settled down to business, respected by his subjects, who had all, since the coming of the Cockatoucan, had their little ups and downs. And Matilda kept the books and wrote out the bills, and really they were both rather happy. Pridmore, disguised as the automatic machine, stood in the shop, and attracted many customers. They used to bring their children and make the poor innocents put their pennies in, and then read Pridmore's good advice. Some parents are so harsh. And the Princess sat in the back garden with the Cockatoucan, and Matilda played with her every afternoon. But one day, as the King was driving through another kingdom, the King of that kingdom looked out of his palace window and laughed as the cart went by, and shouted "Butcher." The Butcher-King did not mind this, because it was true, however rude. But when the other King called out, "What price cat's meat?" the King was very angry indeed, because the meat he sold was always of the best quality. When he told Matilda all about it, she said:—

"Send the army to crush him."

So the King sent his army, and the enemy were crushed. The bird laughed the King back on to his throne, and laughed away the butcher's shop, just in time for His Majesty to proclaim a general holiday, and to organize a magnificent reception for the army. Matilda now helped the King to manage everything, and she wonderfully enjoyed the new and delightful feeling of being clever. So that she felt it was indeed too bad when the Cockatoucan laughed—just as the reception was beautifully arranged. It laughed, and the general holiday turned into a new income-tax; the magnificent reception changed itself to a Royal reprimand, and the army itself suddenly became a discontented Sunday-school treat, and had to be fed with buns and brought home in breaks, crying.

"Something *must* be done," said the King.

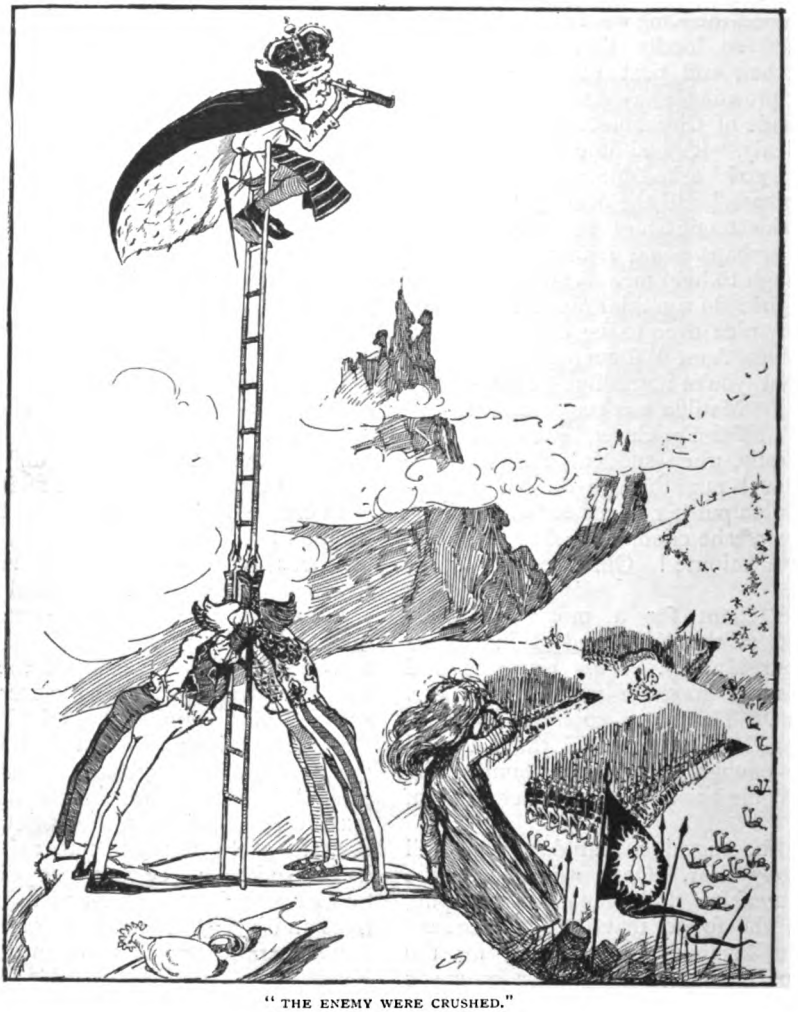
"Well," said Matilda, "I've been thinking. If you make me the Princess's governess, I'll see what I can do. I'm quite clever enough——"

"I must open Parliament to do that," said the King. "It's a constitutional change."

So he hurried off down the road to open Parliament. But the bird put its head on one side and laughed at him as he went by. He hurried on; but his beautiful crown grew large and brassy, and was set with cheap coloured glass in the worst possible taste; his robes turned from velvet and ermine into flannelette and rabbits' fur; his sceptre grew

twenty feet long, and extremely awkward to carry. But he persevered. His Royal blood was up.

"No bird," said he, "shall keep me from my duty and my Parliament."



"THE ENEMY WERE CRUSHED."

But when he got there he was so agitated that he could not remember which was the right key to open Parliament with, and in the end he hampered the lock, and so could not open Parliament at all; and the members of Parliament went about making speeches in the roads, to the great hindrance of the traffic.

The poor King went home and burst into tears.

"Matilda," he said, "this is too much. You have always been a comfort to me. You stood by me when I was a butcher—you kept the books, you booked the orders, you ordered the stock. If you really are clever enough, now is the time to help me. If you won't, I'll give up the business—I'll leave off being a King—I'll go and be a butcher in the Camberwell New Road, and I will get another little girl to keep my books—not you."

This decided Matilda. She said: "Very well, your Majesty—then give me leave to prowl at night. Perhaps I shall find out what makes the Cockatoucan laugh. If I can do that we can take care he never gets it—whatever it is."

"Ah," said the poor King, "if you could only do *that!*"

When Matilda went to bed that night she did not go to sleep: she lay and waited till all the palace was quiet, and then she crept softly, pussily, mousily, to the garden, where the Cockatoucan's cage was, and she hid behind a white rose bush, and looked, and listened. Nothing happened till it was grey dawn, and then it was only the Cockatoucan who woke up. But when the sun was round and red over the palace roof something came creeping, creeping, pussily, mousily, out of the palace. And it looked like a yard and a half of white tape creeping along, and it was the Princess herself.

She came quietly up to the cage and squeezed herself between the bars; they were very narrow bars, but a yard and a half of white tape can go through the bars of any bird-cage *I* ever saw. And the Princess went up to the Cockatoucan and tickled him under his wings till he laughed aloud. Then, quick as thought, the Princess squeezed through the bars, and was back in her own room before the bird had finished laughing. And Matilda went back to bed. Next day all the sparrows had turned into cart-horses; the roads were impassable.

That day, when she went as usual to play with the Princess, Matilda said to her, suddenly:—

"Princess, what makes you so thin?"

The Princess caught Matilda's hand and pressed it with warmth.

"Matilda," she said, simply, "you have a noble heart! No one else has ever asked me that, though they tried to cure it. And I couldn't answer till I was asked, could I? It is a sad, a tragic tale. Matilda, I was once as fat as you are."

"I'm not so *very* fat," said Matilda.

"Well," said the Princess, impatiently, "I was quite fat enough, anyhow. And then I got thin."

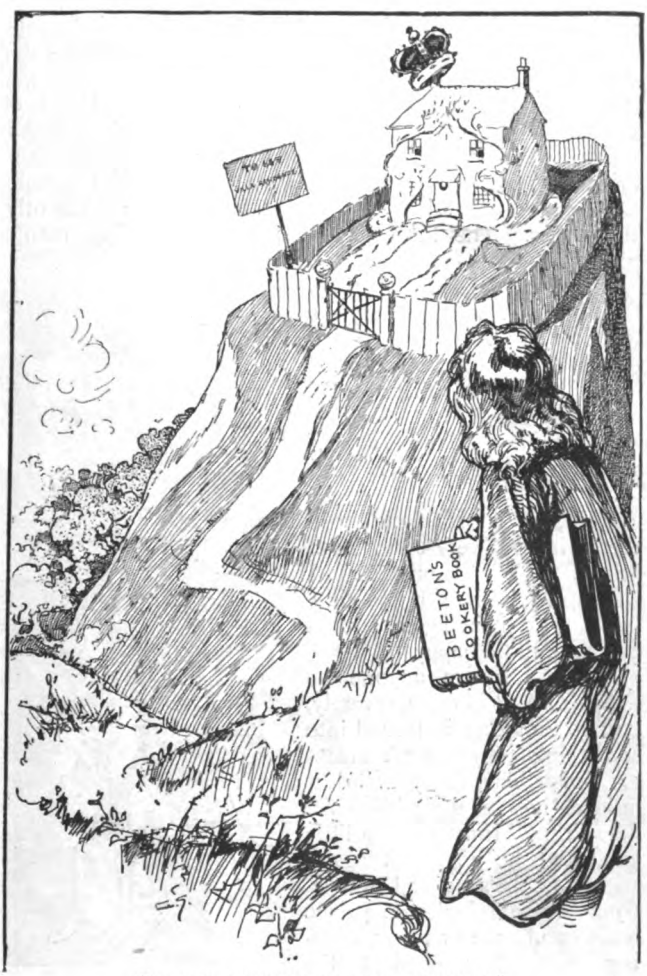
"But how?"

"Because they would not let me have my favourite pudding every day."

"What a shame," said Matilda; "and what *is* your favourite pudding?"

"Bread and milk, of course, sprinkled with rose leaves, and with pear-drops in it."

Of course, Matilda went at once to the King, but while she was on her way the Cockatoucan happened to laugh, and when she reached the King he was in no condition for ordering dinner, for he had turned into a villa residence, replete with every modern improvement. Matilda only recognised him, as he stood sadly in the park, by the crown that stuck crookedly on one of the chimney-pots, and the border of ermine along the garden path. So she ordered the Princess's favourite pudding on her own responsibility,



"HE HAD TURNED INTO A VILLA RESIDENCE."

and the whole Court had it every day for dinner till there was no single courtier but loathed the very sight of bread and milk, and there was hardly one who would not have run a mile rather than meet a pear-drop. Even Matilda herself got rather tired of it, though, being clever, she knew how good bread and milk is for you.

But the Princess got fatter and fatter, and rosier and rosier—her thread-paper gowns had to be let out and let out, till there were no more turnings-in left to be let out—and then she had to wear her old ones that Matilda had been wearing, and then to get new ones. And as she got fatter she got kinder, till Matilda grew quite fond of her.

And the Cockatoucan had not laughed for a month.

When the Princess was as fat as any Princess ought to be Matilda went to her one day and threw her arms round her and kissed her. The Princess kissed her back, and said:—

"Very well. I *am* sorry, then. But I didn't want to say so. But now I will. And the Cockatoucan never laughs except when he's tickled. So there! He hates to laugh."

"And you won't do it again," said Matilda, "will you, dear?"

"No, of course not," said the Princess, very much surprised. "Why should I? I was spiteful when I was thin, but now I'm fat again I want everyone to be happy."

"But how can anyone be happy," asked Matilda, severely, "when everyone is turned into something they weren't meant to be? There's your dear father—he's a desirable villa. The Prime Minister was a little boy, and he got back again, and now he's turned into a comic opera. Half the palace housemaids are breakers, dashing themselves against the palace crockery. The navy, to a man, are changed to French poodles, and the army to German sausages. Your favourite nurse is now a flourishing steam laundry; and I, alas, am too clever by half. Can't that horrible bird do anything to put us all right again?"

"No," said the Princess, dissolved in tears at this awful picture; "he told me once himself, that when he laughed he could only change one or two things at once, and then, as often as not, it turned out to be something he didn't expect. The only way to make everything come right again would be——but it can't be done! If we could only make him laugh on the wrong side of his mouth—that's the secret! He told me so; but I don't even know what it *is*, let alone being able to do it. Could *you* do it to him, Matilda?

"No," said Matilda; "but let me whisper—he's listening—*Pridmore could!* She's often told me she'd do it to me. But she never has. Oh, Princess, I've got an idea!"

The two were whispering so low that the Cockatoucan could not hear, though he tried his hardest. Matilda and the Princess left him listening.

Presently he heard a sound of wheels. Four men came into the rose garden, wheel-

"FOUR MEN CAME INTO THE ROSE GARDEN."

ing a great red thing in a barrow. They set it down in front of the Cockatoucan, who danced on his perch with rage.

"Oh," he said, "if only someone would make me laugh—that horrible thing would be the one to change. I know it would. It would change into something much horrider than it is now. I feel it in all my feathers."

The Princess opened the cage door with the Prime Minister's key, which a tenor singer had found at the beginning of his music. It was also the key of the comic opera. She crept up behind the Cockatoucan and tickled him under both wings. He fixed his baleful eye on the red automatic machine and laughed long and loud, and he saw the red iron and glass change before his eyes into the form of Pridmore. Her cheeks were red with rage, and her eyes shone like glass with fury.

"Nice manners," said she; "what are *you* laughing at, I should like to know? I'll make you laugh on the wrong side of your mouth, my fine fellow!"

She sprang into the cage, and then and there, before the astonished Court, she shook that Cockatoucan till he really and truly did laugh on the wrong side of his mouth. It was a terrible sight to witness, and the sound of that wrong-sided laughter was horrible to hear.

But—instantly—all the things changed back, as if by magic, to what they had been before: the laundry became a nurse; the villa became a King; the other people were just what they had been before—and all Matilda's wonderful cleverness went out like the snuff of a candle.

The Cockatoucan himself fell in two—one half of him became a common ordinary toucan, such as you may have seen a hundred times at the Zoo—unless you are unworthy to visit that happy place—and the other half became a weather-cock, which, as you know, is always changing, and makes the wind change, too. So he has not quite lost his old power. Only, now he is in halves, any power he may have has to be used without laughing. The poor, broken Cockatoucan, like King You-know-who in English history, has never, since that sad day, smiled again.

The grateful King sent an escort of the whole army—now no longer dressed in sausage-skins, but in uniforms of dazzling beauty, with drums and banners—to see Matilda and Pridmore home. But Matilda was very sleepy; she had been clever for so long, that she was quite tired out. It is, indeed, a very fatiguing thing, as no doubt you know. And the soldiers must have been sleepy, too, for one by one the whole army disappeared, and by the time Pridmore and Matilda reached home there was only one man in uniform left, and he was the policeman at the corner.

The next day Matilda began to talk to Pridmore about the Green Land, and the Cockatoucan, and the Villa-Residence King, but Pridmore only said:—

"Pack of nonsense! Hold your tongue, do."

So, of course, Matilda understood that Pridmore did not wish to be reminded of the time when she was an Automatic Nagging Machine, and at once, like a kind and polite little girl, she let the subject drop.

Matilda did not mention her adventures to the others at home, because she saw that they believed her to have spent the time with her Great-Aunt Willoughby.

And she knew if she had said that she had not been there, she would be sent at once, and she did not wish this.

She has often tried to get Pridmore to take the wrong omnibus again, which is the only way she knows of getting to the Green Land, but only once has she been successful, and then the omnibus did not go to the Green Land at all, but to the Elephant and Castle.

But no little girl ought to expect to go to the Green Land more than once in a lifetime. Many of us, indeed, are not even so fortunate as to go there once.

*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

FROM THE FRYING-PAN INTO THE FIRE.

Here is a remarkably good snap-shot of a clever little terrier, who finds an occasional resting-place on the soft, woolly back of a favourite Shetland pony. Even Shetland ponies, however, will sometimes resent too much familiarity, and that is evidently what has happened here. After a good shaking or two, Mr. Terrier has found his resting-place an unsafe one, and, the donkey being near and equally woolly, he has then and there transferred himself from back No. 1 to back No. 2. What happened subsequently we will leave to the reader's imagination. The dog belongs to Mr. A. H. Robinson, of Fencote Hall, Bedale, Yorks. ———

TORPEDO-HUNTING.

The next photograph is one taken from the fore bridge of a torpedo-boat destroyer, and shows a torpedo being brought back to the ship by a boat's crew of seamen. For practice in peace time the torpedo is fired at a moving target and adjusted to run a certain distance, at the end of which it returns to the surface. The motive power being then exhausted it is taken in tow of a boat and returned to the ship and readjusted to be ready for another run. It is fitted with a "dummy" head, which would be replaced in war time by an explosive head. By so doing the same weapon (which is very costly) can be run for practice many times without danger or expense. The boat's crew are engaged in passing the necessary "nose and tail lines" for towing the torpedo. The photograph was taken by Mr. Oliver Tibbits, of Eastgate, Warwick.

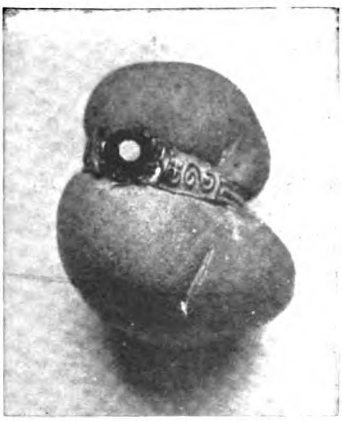
THEY MAKE YOUR MOUTH WATER!

Blackberries over 2in. long and nearly 1in. wide! Such is the luck of the Californian fruit-grower. Mr. W. W. Fuller, of the San Francisco *Chronicle*, sends us this photo. (actual size) of blackberries specially grown. The gentleman who grew these beautiful and succulent berries can also boast of having produced a new kind of fruit altogether, namely, a mixture of blackberry and raspberry, a fruit pronounced by connoisseurs to be of exquisite flavour and delicacy.

* Copyright, 1900, by Geo. Newnes, Limited.

A FOPPISH POTATO.

Whether the remarkable potato shown in the accompanying photograph is of the male or female persuasion is open to doubt, but we need not hesitate in pronouncing this vegetable to be the most coquettish on record. It formed part of the crop of Mr. W. H. Palmer, of Huntingdrop, near Droitwich. Much to the owner's surprise he found that this particular tuber had actually grown through a beautiful finger-ring and thus adorned itself right regally. The photograph was taken by J. Hughes, Bromsgrove.

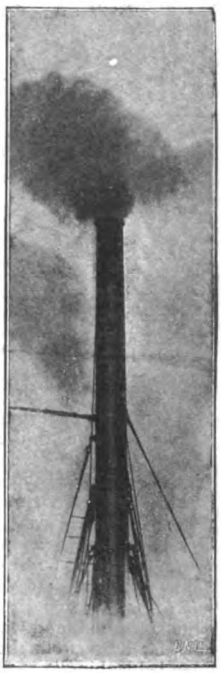


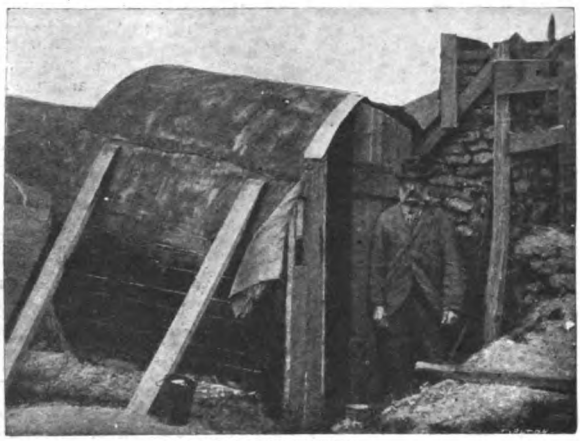
A UNIQUE HIGH-WATER MARK.

From Corinda, Brisbane, Mr. R. W. Horne sends an extraordinary instance of the freaks perpetrated by the memorable '93 flood in those parts. The cross-piece of wood, which can be plainly seen resting in the branches of the tree, remains as an indisputable high-water mark of that awful calamity. The tree which bears this extraordinary flood-freak stands close by the main road which runs from Oxley to Rocklea, and about eight miles from Brisbane in a westerly direction.

MASTS AS SMOKE-STACKS.

The first illustration in the next column shows just the top of the foremast of the steel tow-barge, *U. Le Baron Jenney*, which plies between Duluth, Minnesota, and Buffalo, New York, and other Lake Erie ports. This tow-barge is one of a large line of boats that carry iron ore and grain on the Great Lakes. On the trip when the accompanying views were taken this boat loaded 235,000 bushels of wheat at Duluth for shipment to Buffalo. In the second view the boat is shown lying at the dock with another one just like her, both ready to leave port on the last trip of the season of 1899. The peculiarity of this boat lies in the fact that, while she has two ordinary masts, the foremast is a hollow steel tube and is used as a smoke-stack for two small boilers which are used to operate the bilge-pumps, the steam-winches, and hoisters. The height of the mast, which is some 78ft. to the top, gives a strong draught to the fire. The way this idea came to be utilized in the first place was the danger of fire from sparks on board two tank-boats built to carry oil in bulk for the Standard Oil Company. This method entirely overcame that difficulty, and now there are about ten barges which use the same method. These interesting photos. were kindly sent by Mr. Clifford L. Higgins, of 418, West 8th Avenue, Duluth, Minnesota.



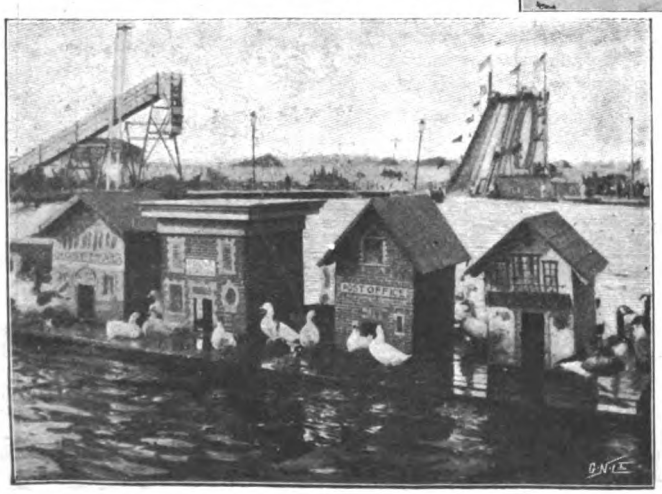


A MODERN DIOGENES.

Mr. C. R. Dix writes from far-off Wellington, N.Z. He says: "The photo. is that of a workman and his 'domicile.' The man is engaged excavating a sila pit some distance from town, and had the beer vat—for such is his house—drawn up to its present position by a bullock team. The vat is about 8ft. in diameter at the larger end. It is more commodious than one would imagine. My friend the photographer, Mr. Hunt, the workman, and myself were seated quite comfortably in the vat while the old fellow was relating his experiences of Colonial life, which extended over a period of forty years. You will notice that he has fitted up a door and also a small window, while close to them are a sod chimney and fireplace. The man's comforts are few—a rough bunk to sleep in with no covering but two sacks; while all I noticed in the way of provisions were a few loaves of bread and some tins containing tea and sugar. But he seemed quite contented, and was glad to be up on the green hills, far away from the noise and bustle of the city lying below him."

GOOSETOWN, CONEY ISLAND.

The photograph of a newly-discovered township is here reproduced for the first time through the enterprise of our correspondent, Mr. A. H. Davidson, of Brooklyn. Mr. Davidson went to Captain Boynton's big show on Coney Island, to shoot the shutes. In endeavouring to rest his nervous system after the exciting experience referred to, he took a stroll through Goosetown. No sooner had he arrived there than he whipped out his kodak, and we reproduce the result. There are a post-office, a police-station, an hospital, and other buildings in this novel township. Judging from the numerous cries of "Quack!" "Quack!" that one heard at regular intervals, the hospital would not seem to rank very highly in the estimation of the otherwise peaceful inhabitants.



AN EXPENSIVE MOUSE-TRAP.

Mr. A. C. V. Davies, of Abbey Gardens, Keynsham, near Bristol, writes as follows: "I was much annoyed one night last November by a couple of mice which must have got into my bedroom during the day. They scuttled about all over the place, and made such a noise that sleep was impossible. Fearing danger to my camera standing close by, I got out

of bed, and, suddenly striking a match, saw a mouse jump from the top of the chest of drawers to the ground, and vanish under the bed. Seeing no more I went back to bed, and slept soundly for the remainder of the night. After dinner the next day I thought of examining the camera to see if the mice had done any damage at all. I was surprised to find a mouse caught by the tail, hanging head downwards. I suppose that this mouse must have been on the top of the camera, and in jumping off caught its tail between the strut and camera, got round the rubber tube, gnawed the tassel from the setting-cord of the shutter, and was then overcome by the rush of blood to the head."

PHOTOGRAPHED UNDER WATER.

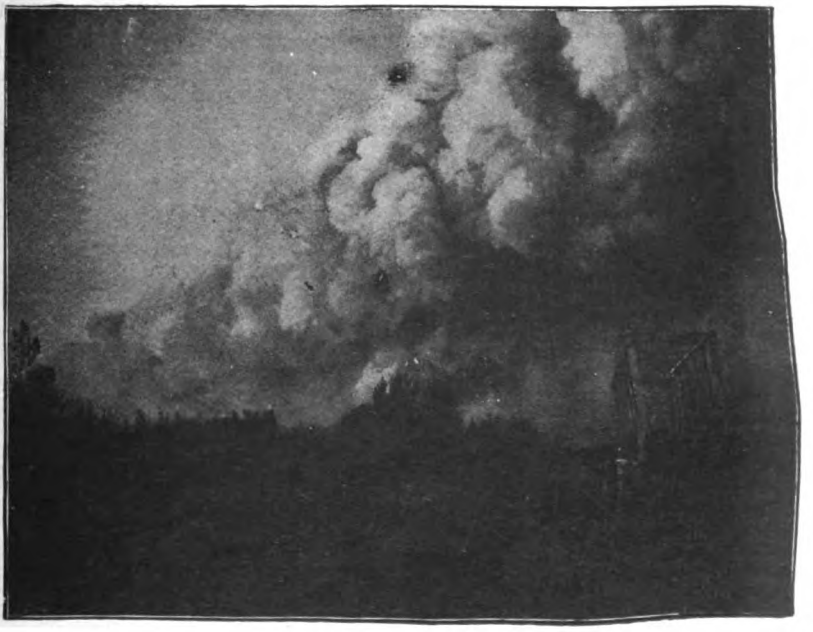
Mr. Albert Waterhouse informs us that this curious snap-shot of himself was taken at his home in Honolulu. Mr. Waterhouse was holding a lead weight in his hands, and was walking on the bottom of a swimming tank, the water being about 8ft. deep.

WHAT A PRAIRIE FIRE LOOKS LIKE.

The accompanying photograph of one of the fiercest fires that ever visited the vicinity of Dominion City was taken by Mr. Geo. Barrowclough about four o'clock in the afternoon of October 20, 1899. It shows the smoke arising from a fire ten miles distant, north of Dominion City. This photo. was taken about five minutes before the great volumes obscured the sun and left everything in darkness. After the smoke blew over clouds of ashes followed. In a short time the fire had reached the outskirts of the town, and but for the Roseau River would probably have swept the city out of existence. Mr. Jno. Smith, who was returning home from Dominion City that afternoon, saw the fire coming suddenly upon him. Being an old settler, he knew what a terrible calamity it was to be overtaken by a prairie fire without means of defence. He knew before he could reach the nearest assistance the fire would be upon him. Suddenly across his excited brain flashed the thought of matches. He lost no time in starting a fire. Slowly, but surely, it burned, and soon there was a bare spot large enough to receive himself, his oxen, and other effects. After covering himself and his oxen with the grain sacks he had in his waggon as a protection from the heat and smoke, he stretched on the ground and waited in suspense. The fire advanced—rushing, roaring, crackling, leaping, seething—and surrounded them. The heat was intense — almost scorching. Then, in about ten minutes, it passed, leaving behind it a black expanse of charred grass and ashes. We are indebted for this interesting curiosity to Mr. M. N. Waddell, of Dominion City.

WHO CAN TELL?

This curiously marked bottle was found in a wine-cellar at Ashburton, Devon, which had been flooded by the River Yeo. The very slight deposit of mud has been cleanly wiped off by the wandering of some animal in its tortuous progress, and the track is indented on one side only ! Can any reader say by what animal this was done ? This interesting bottle is the property of Mr. D. O. Evans, and may be seen in the window of Mr. J. J. O. Evans, of Teignmouth. The photo. is by Valentine and Son, Teignmouth.



A HERO-WORSHIPPER'S WATCH.

Yankee ingenuity long ago turned its attention to designing patriotic mementos during the Spanish-American War, and is still turning out curiosities of the kind in endless variety. Here, for example, is a timepiece for American hero-worshippers. In the centre of the dial is a portrait of Admiral Dewey; while the places of the figures representing the hours are taken by other portraits of those who figured prominently in the conflict in question. President McKinley's picture represents twelve, and following the hands of the watch in their usual direction, the other portraits are those of Ex-Secretary of War Alger, General Wheeler, Admiral Sampson, General Merritt, Admiral Schley, Colonel Roosevelt, Lieutenant Hobson (who sank the *Merrimac*), General Shafter, Captain Sigsbee, General Miles, and Secretary of the Navy Long. This interesting photo. was sent us by Mr. F. J. Leyler, of 4211, Regent Square, Philadelphia.

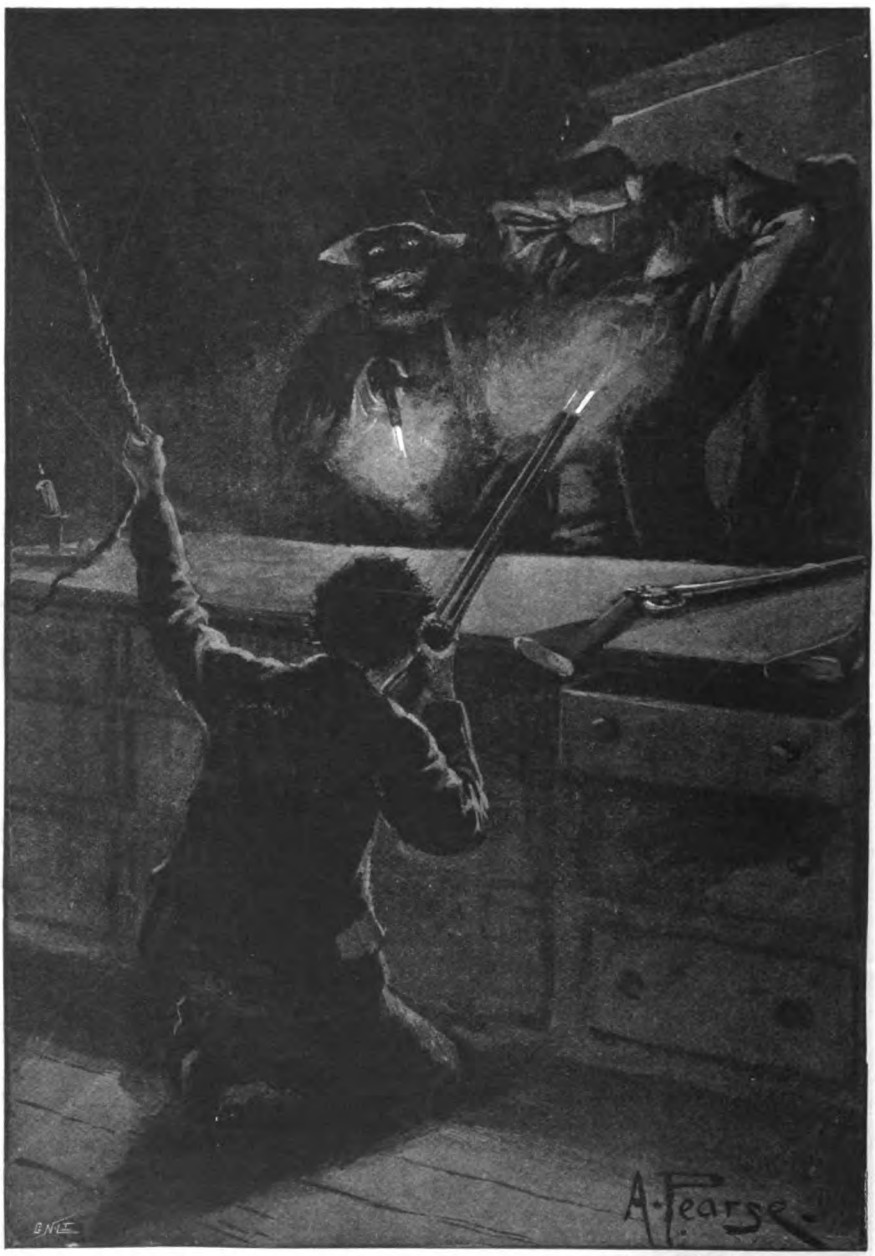
AN EXALTED MULE.

This cart was being charged with effects by some gipsies at the hamlet of Tumpango, near Mexico. When putting too much weight at the rear of the cart the mule-shafter was carried skywards, as shown. This picture was taken from a photograph by Mr. Tumore, an Englishman, who fell to the ground with the negatives in his bosom, all his plates being smashed with the exception of the one reproduced here. Mr. F. Flemenco, of Mexico, is responsible for this contribution.

THE WORK OF WOODPECKERS.

The accompanying photograph, which was taken near Oakville, Cal., by Mr. W. W. Fuller, of the San Francisco *Chronicle*, a few weeks ago, illustrates a remarkable instance of work done by the California woodpecker in storing up a supply of acorns in the trunk of an oak. The section of tree shown measures 4ft. in height, is 34in. in diameter across the base (which is uppermost in the photograph), and 20in. across the other end. By careful counting 1,960 acorns were found embedded in the surface of the

section, which would give fully one acorn to every two square inches. Each acorn fits so neatly the hole in which it is embedded as to suggest the query as to whether the birds storing them there gauged the holes to the varying size of the acorns, or selected the latter to fit the holes they make.



IT WAS UPON THE FOREMOST OF THE MASKED SCOUNDRELS THAT TAHOURDIN EMPTIED BOTH BARRELS.

(*See page* 373.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xix. APRIL, 1900. No. 112.

THE JACKEROO ON G-BLOCK.

By E. W. Hornung.

TAHOURDIN went out to Australia for his health, but in his secret soul he cherished other projects. Cursed by a distressing delicacy, and neither physically nor mentally robust, he had nevertheless an incongruous and quite unsuspected hankering after violent experiences in wild places. In part this was due to much early reading in a well-worn groove, in part to a less worthy stimulus. Tahourdin had a big brother, who had once turned up at South Kensington in romantic rags, thereafter to thrill all callers with graphic accounts of his more respectable adventures by flood and field. This had fired Tahourdin with an ignoble ambition, not so much to do and see and suffer in his turn, as to lay in a stock of yarns which should one day compare creditably with those of his brother. An unerring arrival in Hobson's Bay, after no more than eighty days under canvas, fell proportionately flat upon the bold spirit that had spent half the voyage in wistful day-dreams of coral islands and of pirates' lairs. But there was one dream whose fulfilment nothing could prevent, and Tahourdin set foot on Australian soil with the fixed determination to plant it forthwith in the very heart of the Bush.

Tahourdin's preconception of the Bush (the capital was his in all his letters) was a mental picture of singular detail and definition. He saw huge and sombre trees in the bowels of some vast ravine, with perpetual noon above and perpetual night below—in the cool bed of an ocean of unchanging leaves. He picked out the shadows with horsemen in jack-boots and red shirts (himself among them), now feasting round monster camp-fires, now caracoling behind orderly flocks and herds. Then there were the gold-diggings: you pegged out your claim and dug away until your pick harpooned a nugget. Then there were bushrangers and wild blacks, and Tahourdin had hopes and fears of an encounter with one or the other. Perhaps the hopes predominated; they certainly did in the case of the bushrangers. Tahourdin had read much of these gentry; he intended to go prepared for them, with very little worth stealing about his person at any one time. With

their well-known magnanimity they would probably hand him that little back again, and he would have it to talk about for the term of his natural life.

It will be seen that this egoist did not fly too high. He did not aspire to astonish the world, but only his friends, and he kept his aspiration to himself. Moreover, there was one excuse for him. He was not quite eighteen when he landed at Williamstown.

His letters of introduction made him several friends, who did their best to deter the escaped schoolboy from plunging into a life for which he was obviously unfitted. They assured him that there were no wild blacks within a thousand miles; that bush-ranging had been stamped out years since with the Kellys; that the single digger was obsolete and his claim an anachronism. Tahourdin was sorry to hear all this, but was merely restrained from buying a horse and riding forth to seek adventures as he had originally proposed to himself. Instead, he pushed for introductions to squatters, and finally succeeded in discovering one who at length consented to feed him for his services, if he chose to present himself at the station at his own risk and expense, prepared to do anything he was told, and to pay his own way back if he could not do it well enough to be worth his rations. In other words, he was to be given a trial in the untranslatable capacity of "jackeroo." Now, "G-Block"—the station had no other name—was some six hundred miles from Scott's Hotel in Melbourne, where this dazzling prospect was unfolded; and Tahourdin had broken into the last ten pounds of his last remittance from home. So he could afford the train no farther than Echuca, whence he travelled steerage by the river steamer to Balranald, which he reached with just enough in hand to coach it to Clare Corner. This was the real bush: it did not deserve a capital after all!

The trees were not a bit high. They were uncommonly low. Ranges and gullies there were none. The whole country was as flat and arid as a rusty frying-pan. It whistled with crickets at night. It quivered in the heat all day. Night and day, Tahourdin had to jump down every five miles or so to open a gate, for he was the only passenger. It seemed that the whole country was in squares like a chess-board: it was as though a vast wire net had been cast across it. Tahourdin was thankful to see some cockatoos and parrakeets, and once a snake, and more than once a kangaroo: they were the only points in common between the real and the ideal. In the end he was met by a lean and nasal lout in a "spring" cart, and jolted forty miles back from the so-called road to a few log huts on a sandy pine ridge. Such was the Riverina station of his dreams.

A bronzed man in leggings stepped down from a veranda and introduced himself as Mr. Glover, the manager. Tahourdin appreciated his friendly greeting, but lost no time in inquiring for the gentleman whom he had seen (and rather liked) in Melbourne.

"Oh, he doesn't hang out on G-Block," said Mr. Glover; "he lives at another of his stations down in Vic. He only comes up here for the lamb-marking and the shearing."

"When's that?" asked Tahourdin, feeling somewhat disappointed, but also desirous of obtaining such information for its own sake.

"That?" repeated the manager, cocking his eyebrows with a grin. "It's not the same thing, you know: it's two different things. We lamb-mark about June, and shear in August and September, so they're both over for the year. You're a pretty new chum, I take it, Mr. Tahourdin?"

"As new as they make them," admitted Tahourdin, with a laugh.

"Well, we're very glad of some fresh blood," said Mr. Glover; "there are only three of us here at the homestead, and we get pretty sick of each other at times. No ladies for you, Tahourdin! I haven't sighted a petticoat these six months. A Chinaman cooks for us, and we make our own beds. By the way, Symes and Hutchinson, my overseer and storekeeper, are camping out to-night, so you and I will be alone. Are you very hungry?"

"Not a bit," said Tahourdin. "I had a square meal when I left the coach."

"That's all right. Do you happen to have a good knife on you?"

Tahourdin happened to have a very good one indeed, the kind of present one gets on going to the Colonies, and he produced it with alacrity. The manager found a blade among the other implements, and ran a practised thumb along the edge.

"Will you lend it to me to stick a sheep?"

Tahourdin was taken somewhat aback, but of course complied.

"You see, you run out of things in the back-blocks, and it isn't worth sending for 'em piecemeal. I've been using my own penknife lately: this is a great improvement. You may as well come and lend a hand, or we'll never get any dinner to-night."

"With pleasure," said Tahourdin, sickening at the thought. "But—but you don't kill and eat on the same day?"

"Don't we! Wait till you know this climate; why, it's still a hundred in the shade, and it must be getting on for six o'clock. This way, Tahourdin, and you can hold your knife till I'm ready for it."

So the education of the jackeroo began with a baptism of blood, which turned him cold with sickness in the full glare of that sun. Yet he stood his ground manfully with set jaws; was even interested, once the breath was out of the mangled carcass, in its swift and cleanly reduction to the familiar and inoffensive joints; and marvelled later to find he could partake without a qualm. The barbarous repast was eked out with split-peas and a water-melon, the nearest approach to vegetables on the drought-stricken run, and washed down with pints of boiling tea; what was incongruous, but the more charming on that account, they sat down to it in black coats and clean collars, the manager setting the example.

"We took to dining in our shirt-sleeves," said he, "and then pyjamas. It was time to draw the line, so you find us at the opposite extreme."

Tahourdin did not think it an extreme, but he was pleased, and his pleasure deepened with the night. The manager was very nice to him as they sat in the veranda and watched the stars. He was a man of thirty, hard-featured, square-jowled, brown skinned, a native Australian from wideawake to spurs; very positive in his opinions; not particular as to the language in which he aired them; but, upon the whole, and seeing he was the "boss," decidedly amiable to the beardless and untried jackeroo. In point of fact, he was greatly entertained by Tahourdin, who was an exceedingly ingenuous and confiding youth, susceptible to the least friendliness, and apt under its influence to divulge his own feelings and affairs with uncalled-for candour. Thus the jackeroo went to bed, in a chamber rude enough to satisfy even his requirements, with the feeling that he had made a valuable friend for life; and the manager, chuckling consumedly over a final pipe, foresaw infinite sport.

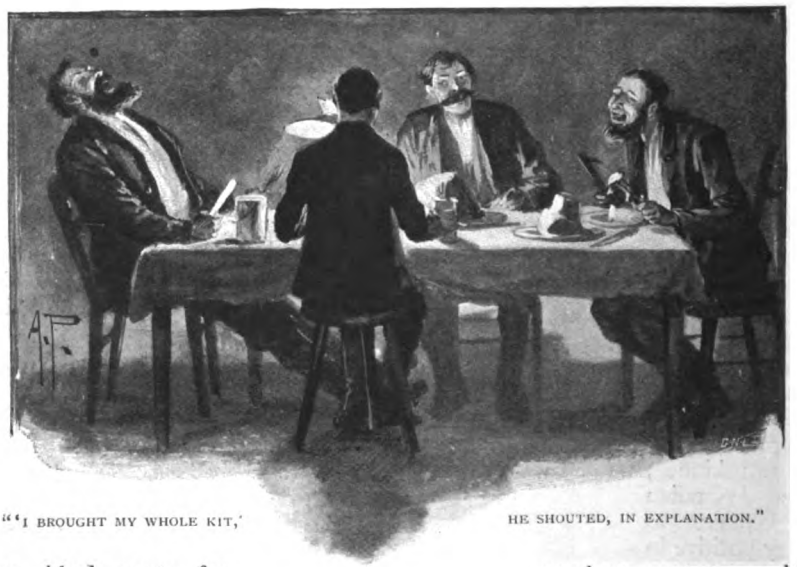
Next day they spent on the run together, shifting a few attenuated sheep from one paddock to another, and covering altogether some twenty miles on horseback in the heat. Tahourdin had not ridden since he became too big for the pony at home, and evening found him an ignominious cripple, driven to join insincerely in the laugh against himself. He was no longer in the highest spirits. He had shown great ineptitude in the saddle, and once at least, in the heat of a skirmish with the stupid sheep, his new friend had spoken to him in a way that rankled. But he had enlisted of his own free will; he was not such a fool as to resent a sharp word from a superior officer, and they rode home together the same good friends. Or so Tahourdin imagined; and Glover would have vowed that he was right; for there was no real malice in the man.

Nevertheless, his manner changed towards Tahourdin in the inspiring company of those tried comrades, Messrs. Hutchinson and Symes, station storekeeper and overseer

"A SKIRMISH WITH THE STUPID SHEEP."

respectively. Hitherto it had not been worth while to poke even legitimate fun at the jackeroo; there had been no audience; but the manager soon made up for lost time. Tahourdin had scarcely given a second thought to his conversational indiscretions of the night before; the other had treasured the whole series; and out they came at dinner for the delectation of the previous absentees, in bursts of oblique raillery that left its object red with rage, for all the smiles he deemed it prudent to assume.

"Mr. Tahourdin never mixed tea and mutton before. Where's that champagne, Hutchinson? You're not half a store-keeper; but cheer up! After all, we're not such savages as Mr. Tahourdin expected to find us: he was quite astonished at our



"'I BROUGHT MY WHOLE KIT,' HE SHOUTED, IN EXPLANATION."

putting on black coats for dinner — *my* word!"

"I wasn't a bit," protested Tahourdin, stung to the quick by this subtle perfidy, but still all good-nature on the surface. "I thought it awfully jolly."

"But not so jolly as dressing altogether, eh? He dresses every night of his life when he's at home in the old country; don't you, Tahourdin? You don't happen to have brought your dress-clothes with you, eh?"

Tahourdin, amid roars, confessed that he had. "I brought my whole kit," he shouted in explanation. "I had nowhere to leave anything. Of course I wanted them in Melbourne."

"Never mind, Tahourdin! You must make allowances for us; what can you expect of poor back-blockers? But, I say, it's a thousand pities we've got no lady of the house! Tahourdin could tell her about the latest fashions. His sister's been presented at Court!"

It was an undeniable fact, but how the fact had slipped out overnight Tahourdin could not now conceive. Had he fallen so low in unconscious boastfulness? He remembered now that he had been misled into talking about his people; and he was certainly very proud of that sister. Well, she would be the last to forgive him if this detestable conversation should ever come to her ears; meanwhile he deserved all he got.

"Which court?" inquired the overseer, a little man with a squeaky voice, but the roughest customer with whom Tahourdin had yet foregathered.

"The police-court, of course," replied Tahourdin, plunging into the joke in desperation. The manager's face grew long at once.

"Oh, I wouldn't give her away. His own sister, too! We'll drop the subject, gentlemen, if you please."

But another was soon forthcoming.

"Have we got any bushrangers kicking about, Hutchy? Because Tahourdin would rather like to meet one."

"The deuce he would!" cried the store-keeper, a buffoon himself, who foresaw many a merry innings when his senior should have wearied of the game.

"The deuce indeed!" echoed Tahourdin, trying once more to laugh it off. "I never

said that, Mr. Glover, I really didn't. I only said I'd read about the bushrangers, and was a bit disappointed to find them extinct. I rather wanted to meet somebody who's been stuck up by them——"

"Or be stuck up yourself, eh?"

"Well, I'm not even sure that I'd mind that so very much, if I hadn't too much to lose, and they left me with a pretty whole skin. It would be an experience worth having, I'm blowed if it wouldn't!"

"If you want real, warranted, cold-drawn pluck," said the manager, sententiously, "you must go to the old country for it, after all!"

It was not done in temper, or with at all an evil grace; but the meal was over, the chairs pushed back; and at this point the jackeroo, still red, but still grinning, managed to retreat in fair order.

"That was a nasty one," chuckled the storekeeper.

"One agen' his duck-house," squeaked the overseer.

"Not a bit of it!" cried Glover, rounding upon his wise men like any potentate. "I happened to mean that. I shouldn't be a bit surprised if that kid hadn't some grit in him somewhere. But—*my* word! What did I tell you chaps? *Isn't* he sport?"

He was more. He had come there of his own accord, for his own peculiar ends. He was willing to work for his bread, as a necessity of the situation, and disposed to enjoy that novelty with the rest. He was none the less a dabbler and a dilettante among hard-working men. He was not only sport, therefore, but perfectly fair game.

Only the game was not pursued in a very sporting spirit. It was generally three to one; never less than two; for, individually, the trio could be nice enough to Tahourdin; but, collectively, and even in couples, they seemed to vie with one another to make bush life a burden to him. Of course, this was not their cold-blooded design; equally of course, Tahourdin had himself to thank for the excessive measure of his humiliation. He was sensitive and vain, though unconscious of his vanity. It was none the less easily wounded on that account. His skin was as thin as a sensitized film; he was ashamed to show his arms; yet he had deliberately put himself at the mercy of men of infinitely coarser fibre, who could have thrashed him as they thrashed their dogs.

The manager was right, however, and there was some salt in Tahourdin even here. Having taken up his false position, of his own free will, he was not to be chaffed out of it at theirs. He was not to be bullied out of it. He might suffer, but he would never fly from what after all was mere badinage, though of a peculiar brand. That much must be allowed. It was not the kind of chaff the jackeroo had come in for at school, though new boys at a public school plumb a very fair depth in this respect, and Tahourdin had been of the type to touch bottom. But in those days he had been freely kicked; an occasional blow would have been almost a comfort in these. They did not descend to that: he was so obviously a weakling; and their nice abstention from physical violence was an unconsciously cruel reminder of the fact. They did not visit him with the traditional torments reserved for the conventionally robust "new chum." They did not put him on the dangerous horses. They merely mangled his somewhat peculiar patronymic whenever they addressed him. They merely discussed him in the third person as though he were not present, when he was; and that so freely and fully, amid so brisk a competition in insult, obscenity, and brutal wit, that blood and tears would rise together in the end, and the wretched youth rush choking from the room.

Once, however, he behaved differently; and the single instance must suffice to justify all generalities. If these be too strong—— but the one little incident shall speak for itself.

It was a Sunday afternoon not three weeks after Tahourdin's arrival. The heat was an outrage on man and beast. Half-naked and unkempt, with face and arms not merely sunburnt, but red-raw and swollen from the burning, Tahourdin lay stretched upon his bed in the full tide of a hard-earned and duly grateful siesta. To him enter the high-voiced overseer and the big buffoon of a Hutchinson. They wake him up. He suffers this without complaint. They criticise his clothes, his trunks, his boots, his razor (a fruitful item, being in scarcely visible request), and, lastly, his home photographs upon the wall. All this he endeavours to take as he still half-believes that it is meant; but the photographs are different. At each word he winces; the more, because it is the one pretentious portrait, that of the favourite sister in her Court train, on which these vultures settle. Their vulgarity is intolerable: speak he must.

"I say, dry up!"

Not the slightest notice.

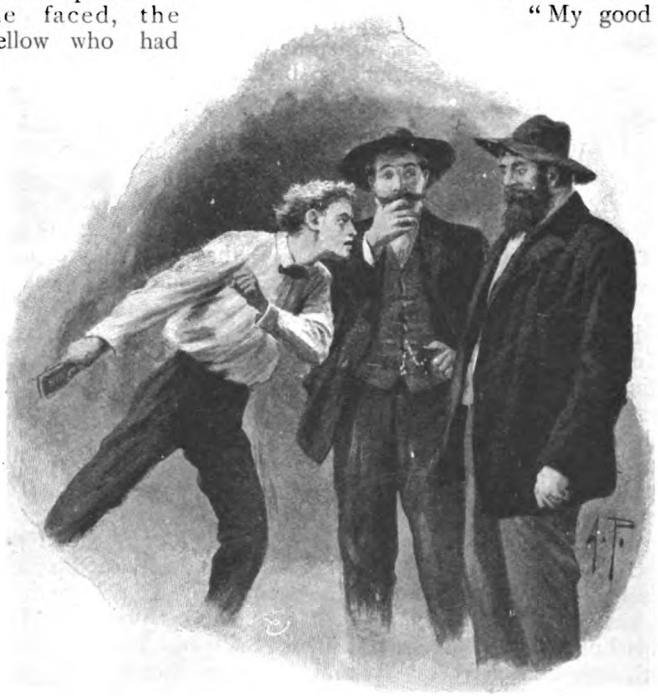
"Say what you like about anything

else, but have some respect for a fellow's people. Do you hear me? Do you hear, I say?"

They heard, but did not heed. The photograph was that of a fine young woman in compulsory white, with rounded arms and shapely neck, eyes bright from the day's ordeal, yet not without a hint of tears, and in the upper lip contemptuous impatience of this last infliction at the photographer's hands. Face and form appealed equally to the connoisseurs, whose insolent admiration was the final outrage. Comment capped comment, not gross exactly, not absolutely coarse, yet inconceivably boorish and underbred; until Tahourdin, his protests ignored, had torn the frame from the wall, and leapt afoot like a thin flame.

"You——cad!" he roared. "Take off your coat and come outside!"

It was the big storekeeper whom he faced, the fellow who had gone the further in clownish disrespect; and Ajax and the lightning were better matched. The absurdity of the thing silenced both aggressors. Yet at the second glance it did not look so very absurd. Tahourdin was rolling up his sleeves, and his arms were indeed like the pipe-stems to which this very enemy had often likened them. But his face, fiery enough before, was now literally blazing with present passion and long arrears of resentment combined.



"TAKE OFF YOUR COAT AND COME OUTSIDE."

"You'll give me a hiding," he continued. "I know that well enough. Do you think I care? I'll mark you first! I'll mark you for this! I'll mark you——"

And he repeated his most opprobrious epithet, unpresentable adjective and all; and what would have become of him in the next five minutes it is happily unnecessary to speculate, for at this juncture the manager arrived upon the scene, demanding an explanation of the row, which was duly given in the overseer's falsetto.

"You young fool," said Glover, "what do you mean by calling Hutchy a name like that? Do you know what you deserve?"

"Yes, and I want it. Don't stop him. I can take all he gives me. But, by Jove, I'll mark him first!"

"My good little ass, he didn't mean any harm. Did you, Hutchy?"

"Of course I didn't," said the burly storekeeper, looking hurt, for the evil word was rankling, and not the less because he had no desire to make Tahourdin swallow it with his teeth. Indeed, the man was less brute than boor; he also spoke the truth. He had not seriously exceeded the limits of legitimate "chiack."

"You hear that, Tahourdin?" continued Glover, not unkindly. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, *my* word, to take a fellow up like that. Cad! That's a nice word to chuck about! It may do in the old country, but it won't do here."

"I'm ready to pay for it, right or wrong!"

"But you sha'n't. I won't let you. No more would Hutchy. I've known him for years, and he's one of the best. I thought you were a good sort, too, Tahourdin, until to-day! I thought we were all good pals! It isn't my idea of being pals to fly at a chap like that, and call him a cad when he didn't

mean any harm. Is it yours? We'd better leave you to think it over."

But Tahourdin was quite unable to think. He was dazed by the new light in which the manager had placed his conduct and Hutchinson's side by side. Glover had spoken kindly; he might be right; at any rate, he had put Tahourdin pretty effectually in the wrong; and the sense of this, after such a scene and such humiliation, was more than he could bear. He could have borne it if he had bled for it. But to be put in the wrong, and yet let off, was as the very hand and seal to his dishonour; and flinging himself on the bed where they had found him, Tahourdin wept like the child he was.

The others were already laughing it off.

"But I believe he *would* have marked you, Hutchy! He meant having a jolly good try. By the way, what did I tell you about his grit? He's got some, after all, you see; he'd have taken his hiding standing up."

The overseer squeaked dissent.

"I don't think it, Mr. Glover; he's a fiddlin' little fraud, if you ask me. He didn't know what he was doin' of just now; he was in too much of a stink. You try him in cold blood, and he'll back out every time."

"You mean out of a fight?"

"Out of anything you like."

"You don't think he'll ever show any more spunk than he did this afternoon?"

"He'll take jolly good care never to show as much."

"Oh; and what's your opinion, Hutchy? Do you agree with George Symes?"

The storekeeper was in a somewhat delicate position.

"I do and I don't," said he. "Of course I wasn't going for the cove; what's more, he knew it. Still, I must say he ran his risk."

"So you don't think it was a genuine challenge?"

"I don't know what to think of it."

"But you also wouldn't trust Tahourdin in a tight place?"

"No, I'm hanged if I would!"

The manager looked from one to the other of his friends, and shook his head.

"I'm sorry for you two chaps! You're hopelessly wrong, both of you. That young ass has got the right stuff in the right place—not too much of it—but enough. He takes too much notice of himself; he's got a lot of rot to be knocked out of him still. But if he stays here long enough he'll turn up trumps, and when you least expect it, you bet!"

"Do *you* bet, old man?" inquired the cracked voice, slily.

"I'm perfectly willing to back my opinion."

"How much for?"

"Five notes." *

"Done with you," squeaked Symes.

"And with me?" said Hutchy.

"Another five!"

"Done again," cried the storekeeper. "But look here: how long are we to give him to play up in? He's only here for the fun of the thing, and don't you forget it. He may chuck it, after this."

"Give him six months," said Glover, "and I think he'll stay them out. If he doesn't make you change your opinion in that time——"

"The bet's off?"

"Not it! I'll pay up. But you must both play a bit lighter in the meantime; give the poor fellow a rest now and then, or you'll spoil his nerve. I know it was me that started it, but I'm rather sorry now that I did. I don't ask you to let him off altogether: he doesn't deserve that; only don't you two have quite such an almighty down on him. And I'll win my money yet—five notes from each of you—let's make another note of that."

And Tahourdin thought it all came of his having shown fight at last; that was part of the comic little tragedy; but the really serious part was to follow soon enough.

It was just before Christmas that the news came in. Tahourdin first heard of it at dinner on the 23rd of December, and, in his growing confidence, was not ashamed to express his delight that there were bush-rangers once more, after all these years ("for my benefit," said Tahourdin), in New South Wales. His little aside was taken more seriously than he expected. The three sat looking at him. As a matter of fact, they had made their arrangements to nip across country to Ivanhoe races on Christmas Day; the jackeroo only was to be left behind; but this startling rumour threatened to upset all their plans.

It seemed that another station, within but fifty miles, had been stuck up in quite the old fashion: masters and men (to say nothing of some ladies) imprisoned in an underground dairy: and the place looted in a style worthy of bygone traditions. The miscreants had disappeared for the time being. None knew whence they had sprung; but they were hiding in the midst of stations, and were

* One-pound notes.

certain to descend upon another ere long; their choice a toss-up, so far as station-folk could judge.

"Of course I shall chuck the races," said Glover, gloomily. "George and Hutchy can go; but I must stay here. Not that they're the least likely to trouble *us;* that's the nuisance of it."

"Then why not leave me, as you intended?" asked Tahourdin, in a flutter. "If we've nothing worth robbing, what harm can they do?"

The trio looked at him.

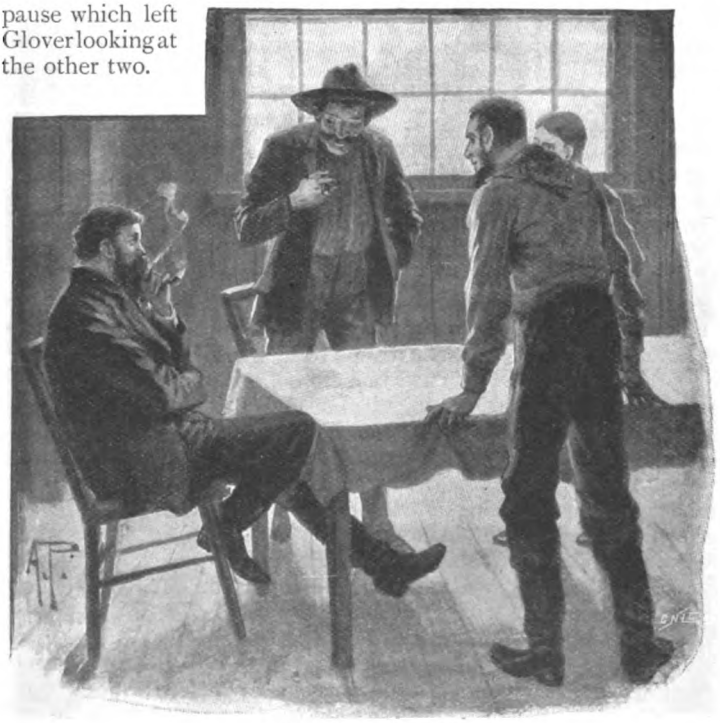
"Rot!" said Glover.

"But I mean it. They're not likely to come here. You say so yourself. If they did come, they'd have to go empty away."

"There are always the horses."

"They would need running up."

There was a pause which left Glover looking at the other two.



"HOW ABOUT MY BET?"

"How about my bet?" said he.

Tahourdin took this to refer to the races.

"You don't win it yet," said Symes.

"But I will!" cried Glover. "I've a jolly good mind to take Tahourdin at his word, and leave him in sole charge."

"Do!" pleaded Tahourdin.

And in the end he did.

But meanwhile no more had been heard of the bushrangers, and it was even doubted whether the original report was not a mere canard. Such things are peculiarly common in the bush, where most intelligence travels by word of mouth, and gains inevitably in the process. Either to soothe his conscience (as it seemed, indeed, to Tahourdin), or for both reasons, the commanding Glover was the first to express incredulity in the matter. Tahourdin was only too thankful to take his opinion for even more than it was worth; the other two, however, seemed doubtful. As for the rank and file of the station hands, they were never informed of the rumour; in old days it had been the rank and file of station hands who had shown a dangerous sympathy with such desperadoes.

So said Glover, and he seemed to know, though he was not the man to trust too implicitly to his own opinion. This was shown in the precautions which he took in the face of his own conviction. He helped Tahourdin to carry his bed into the store under cloud of the night of Christmas Eve. The store was a log-hut standing by itself. In it was a rack of shot-guns, and Tahourdin was given the key of a drawer full of cartridges. Before daylight the trio went off, with a led horse which the odious Symes, a magnificent horseman, was to mount in person for the Maiden Plate; before midnight, if their horseflesh could do it, they would all three be safe and sound again on G-Block.

There are many reasons why Tahourdin is never likely to forget his Christmas on that station. The day was unique in his short experience, first because he had it wholly to himself, and secondly by reason of the incredibly hot wind which blew from dawn to dewless eve. This wind had been blowing all the week, but it surpassed itself on Christmas Day. It came from the Equator

in one steady burning blast, as from some fiery furnace of the gods or the gates of hell itself. It heated everything, indoors and out, with a heat independent of the sun. The water in the ewers might have come fresh from the hot tap, the bed-linen from the ironing-board. In the kitchen the Chinaman used his apron to lift a latch, and could have cooked the Christmas dinner on the four-hundred-gallon tank outside, without burning a stick. The men dozed in their hut; the crows hid in the pines; and on the homestead veranda, with the station to himself and the day his own, Tahourdin could almost feel the blood sparkling in his veins.

This is the surprising property of the hot north wind six hundred miles inland. It does not enervate like damp or sluggish heat. It scorches the nostrils and cracks the lips, but is almost bracing in its effect upon a healthy body and a sanguine soul.

Tahourdin, at all events, had never felt so well in his life, and seldom happier. He was getting on better with the others. That was much to him. But it was nothing to his excited pride in the present trust reposed in him. A chance of bushrangers, and his little self left in charge! So he put it in more than one letter that he wrote that day. It was such an opportunity for letter-writing, and such a situation to describe! There was no need to finish these letters at this sitting; it would never do to put them in suspense at South Kensington for a whole week; but he felt that he would thrill them more by writing of a present than of a past danger, and he deemed it legitimate to thrill his people when he was genuinely thrilled himself. And his mood was indeed one of suppressed but intense excitement, as even the Chinese cook might have seen when he showed himself on the veranda, and Tahourdin started to his feet like a guilty man. Then he would reconnoitre the premises at frequent intervals, while early in the morning he put a cartridge into every barrel in the store. But nothing happened, and the poor youth wrote in raptures to the end, while the perspiration ran down his nose and sometimes rattled on the crisp, hot paper, to leave blisters as of contradictory tears, and to dry before the leaf was turned. At the end of each letter a space was left, a space that Tahourdin thought to fill next day with comic lamentations on the anti-climax: so little was his heart of hearts prepared.

And yet he sat up for the others until two o'clock next morning, and only went to bed then because the wind flew round into the south, as the hot wind will at its worst, and he found himself shivering on the veranda before he realized the cause. It was a cloudy night; the change of temperature was sudden and extreme beyond belief; bed became the one place for a sane being, and even there Tahourdin required his rug. The Chinaman had retired hours earlier to his opium-reeking kennel off the kitchen; but at the men's hut, which, however, was a quarter of a mile away, appropriate festivities had been sustained until past midnight, thereafter to sink from songs and wranglings to sudden silence with the lights still burning. Tahourdin in his innocence had been up to see the cause, and had left the scene in fitting darkness. He need not rely upon the men. It was a pity, because the bell which roused them each morning was slung from the wood-and-iron gable of the store, and, though the rope hung outside as a rule, Tahourdin had been at some pains to alter this arrangement for that night. Thus a temporary extension of the bell-rope hung ready to his hand when at length he lay down in the small hours. The store door was locked and bolted; the store window was high up and barred. Tahourdin smiled in premature judgment upon the folly and futility of it all; and, smiling, fell asleep.

He cannot have slept very long; what awoke him you will possibly guess. It was an unseen hand trying the locked and bolted door. Tahourdin was on his elbow in an instant, trembling horribly, yet exalted in that instant above his normal self.

"Who's there?" he called, shrilly.

The answer was short and sharp:—

"Open up!"

Tahourdin found the match-box, and lit the candle at his elbow.

"I'm hanged if I do," he said. "Who are you?"

"You'll know soon enough."

"So will some others," shouted Tahourdin, and straightway the station-bell rang out upon the night. Outside there fell a pause, a whisper, and a brutal laugh.

"You're a silly fool, whoever you are. The hut's baled up, and every man a prisoner; as it happens they're as drunk as coots, but it'd make no odds if they wasn't. Open up, curse you, or we'll open *you*."

The door shook and rattled in a horrible manner. Tahourdin was shaking, too, but he cocked one gun, laying two others upon the counter.

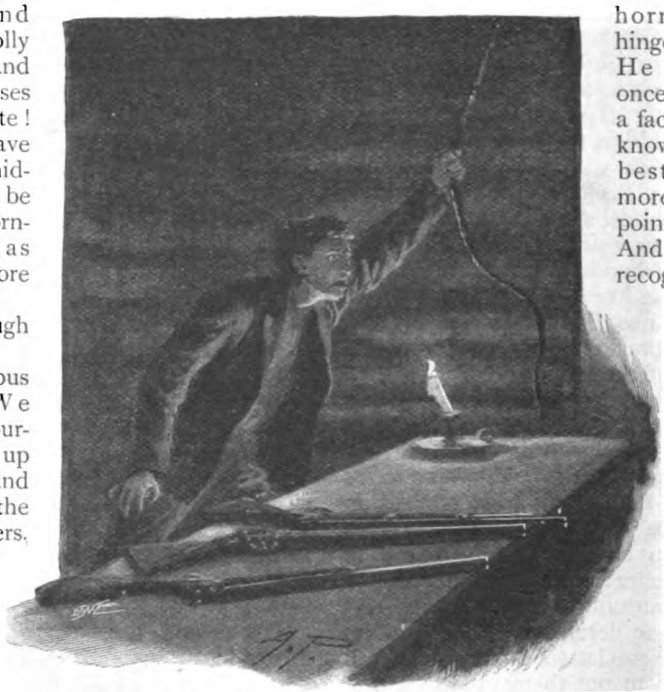
"You're the bushrangers, are you?"

"You can call us what you like; we'll pay you in a minute!"

"Then I call you a pack of infernal ruffians and cowards; and I tell you this—you may have nobbled the men, but you don't nobble me! I'm bolted and barred, and jolly well armed — and I expect my bosses back any minute! They were to have been here by midnight; they'll be here before morning, as sure as you'll swing before you've done!"

A louder laugh —a fouler oath.

"You precious innocent! We brought 'em in ourselves, trussed up like chickens, and they're now in the hut with the others. So much for your blessed bosses!"



"STRAIGHTWAY THE STATION BELL RANG OUT UPON THE NIGHT."

Tahourdin sickened. So he stood alone! For an instant there seemed but one thing to be done, but for an instant only. If he stood alone, he would fall alone, and after his death the bush world — nay, the world at large — would know him for what he had really been.

The stimulus was odious—the resolve heroic.

And who knows how many heroes are no more heroically inspired?

"Break in the door!" yelled this one, beside himself with excitement. "The first man comes in dead!"

He had no idea how many men there were, for one did all the threatening, while the remnant egged him on in savage undertones which gave no clue to their number. The spokesman had a voice in accordance with the best bushranging traditions, as conned by Tahourdin with prophetic fascination. It might have been the voice of a gentleman, and was worthy of Captains Melville and Moonlite. Tahourdin actually thought of these worthies as he awaited their successors' next move; but he need not have gone to Australia or to Australian criminals for what promptly followed. Some iron implement was hammered between door and door-post, just below the upper hinge. Tahourdin held up the candle, and saw to his horror that the hinge was rusty. He remembered once hearing, as a fact not generally known, that at their best hinges are more vulnerable points than bolts. And he suddenly recognised that he was beset not by bushrangers, who would have stuck him up in broad daylight, but by common cracksmen, come to break in and steal with no more gallantry than their fellow-practitioners of South Kensington itself!

"*You* bale up the men!" he roared in scorn. "*You* stick up a station! Why, you're nothing but a gang of common or garden thieves!"

And out rang the station bell once more, in a frenzied peal exactly worthy of the poor ringer, who was indeed half mad with fear and excitement, and sudden and ill-founded hope. Yet justification was to follow, for that very instant the hammering stopped, and in its stead a thunderous voice promised nameless tortures if the ringing went on.

"That proves it!" shouted Tahourdin. "You never interfered with the men; but they'll interfere with you; they're not so drunk as all that! Do your worst to me, they'll avenge me; and I'll kill a couple of you first, and my bosses——"

The high hysterical voice was drowned in a deafening assault upon the hinge itself. A splinter flew; the hinge had started; a few more blows sent it flying over Tahourdin's head, with strips of wood adhering. This was the beginning of the end. The door

itself kept its place a little longer, held wonderfully fast by lock, bolts, and remaining hinge; when this went, all went; but Tahourdin had gained some minutes' grace. He was discovered crouching behind the counter, his head only showing above a rampart mounted with three double-barrelled guns, one of which was at his shoulder. And to the end his left hand tugged the bell-rope, the last clang exactly coinciding with the first shot.

A couple of masked scoundrels had tumbled in over the ruin of the door, and it was upon the foremost of these that Tahourdin had emptied both barrels in his frenzy. The man clapped his hands to his face and went reeling back into the night. His comrade meanwhile fired a revolver point-blank at Tahourdin, yet missed him, whereupon the defender discharged his second piece with the like result, having no time even to raise it from the counter. Never was worse shooting at such a range: four times in four seconds Tahourdin gave himself up for dead, and four times the flash was followed by no twinge of pain in any portion of his body. Not a word was spoken, but each time the masked man aimed deliberately, his eyes peering through round holes in the crape, and fixed steadily on Tahourdin, who returned their glare. It was all he could return; the wretch had seized the third pair of barrels, and held them firmly to one side. But Tahourdin had the stock with both hands, and when the revolver was empty he had another chance: for the one bad shot fled incontinent, followed without a moment's hesitation by the other.

Through the yard they rushed, and out and in among the pine trees, dark as it was, though indeed there was a lantern burning somewhere, and by its rays Tahourdin had one glittering glimpse of a horse's trappings. But the light was too little and the pace too great for effective firing, and this time it was not to his discredit that neither charge found flesh. In another instant Tahourdin had clubbed his piece, and in yet another he had struck his man senseless from behind. Drunk with battle, the clubbed gun whirling round his head, the now unrecognisable Jackeroo danced round in nick of time to meet poetic justice in his turn. He saw absolutely nothing: there was a single crash, a strangled cry, and he lay upon his back with closed eyes and a convulsive chin—a dead man with a living jaw.

He came to his full senses in Glover's room. This was many hours afterwards. There had been an earlier but only partial return, when insensibility had merged into natural sleep, but Tahourdin had no recollection of it. He knew nothing until he awoke between the manager's sheets. He was alone. It was evidently afternoon. He could not imagine what had happened; and this was the trouble when the manager entered somewhat later, though by that time he had recalled everything up to the moment of his eclipse.

"So you were in time! You must have been! I knew you would be—didn't I tell them so?"

"Yes, I was in time," said Glover, with dry kindliness; "but keep cool, old chap, or I shall have to clear out. I'm what we call a bush doctor, remember! And it was a deuce of a knock you got—poor old boy!"

His voice was almost affectionate: he was feeling Tahourdin's pulse; no woman could have done it more tenderly.

"Where was I hit?" asked Tahourdin. "I can't find a bandage anywhere."

"It was clean on the point," said Glover, looking upon the stricken hero in sorrowful pride. "It wasn't a bullet, though. I wouldn't bother about it. You'll knock yourself up if you do."

But his look had reminded Tahourdin that he *was* a hero, after all, and the recollection disturbed his simplicity of mind.

"I did what I could," he sighed, with self-conscious modesty.

"You did magnificently!" cried Glover, enthusiastically. "We're all most awfully proud of you. And—you've put ten notes in my pocket!"

"How?"

"I'm ashamed to tell you now."

"It'll knock me up if you don't," whined Tahourdin, slily.

"Well, then—after that row you had with Hutchy—do you remember the one I mean?"

Tahourdin sighed.

"I wish I didn't!"

"Well, after that we had an argument about you. They thought you hadn't meant business. I swore you had. In the end we had a bet about it."

"You bet about me?"

"On you, my boy! I backed you for five notes with each of them—to show your grit if you got a chance. And you have done it—*my* word! You've done what the three of us rolled together couldn't have done better in your place."

Tahourdin did not speak. He merely thrust a sunburnt hand and the thinnest of wrists over the single sheet that covered him. Glover crushed it in sympathetic silence.

"What happened after I was knocked out?" asked Tahourdin, at length.

"Oh, the very deuce of a row. I'll tell you about that to-morrow."

"But how many of them were there, and what happened to the two I tackled?"

Glover seemed embarrassed.

"Did I—*kill* one of them?" whispered the jackeroo.

"No, no, you didn't do that."

"What, then?"

"I'd really rather tell you to-morrow! Upon my word, you're not in a fit state to-night!"

"But you're keeping something from me! I sha'n't rest until I know what it is. Were any lives lost?"

"None."

"How many of them were there?"

"Three or four."

"Have you got them?"

"Got them? *My* word!"

Ha, ha! Nice sort of trick to play, wasn't it?"

"It was worse than me," chuckled Tahourdin; "but I'm jolly grateful to him, I can tell you. Still, I must have half-blinded the chap."

"You did; and burnt off all his eyebrows and eyelashes; but *he'll* be all right."

Tahourdin dismissed all qualms.

"And what about the other one?"

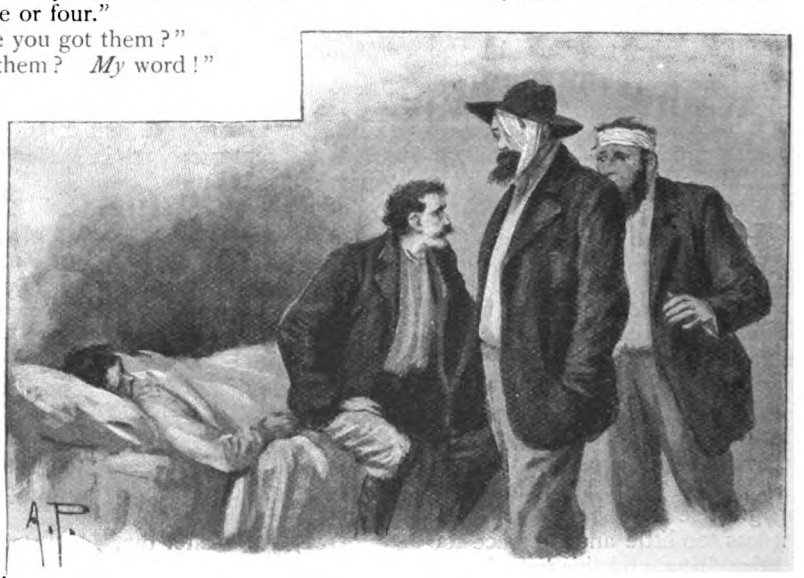
"Oh, he'll be all right, too; he's wearing a sort of skull-cap of sticking-plaster at present; but his head's pretty thick, and it'll mend."

Tahourdin said nothing. He felt very weak, and the glow that had come over him, from head to heels, was as a consuming fever. There were steps on the veranda outside.

"So he's awake, is he?" said the store-keeper's voice. "May we come in?"

"Not yet," said Glover.

"Yes, do!" cried Tahourdin.



"WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, SYMES?"

"Then you ought to know whether it's three or four. Never mind! I only hope you're telling me the truth. What about that chap I shot? Will you swear he's not dead or dying?"

"Till I'm blue in the face. And I'll tell you why. There was evidently something wrong with those cartridges; er—the fact is, we used to get our last jackeroo to load 'em, and it's quite clear to me now that he must have put in double powder and no shot.

And they spoke in the same breath; but it was Tahourdin who raised his voice; and in marched the other two.

For a full minute there was silence in the room: the appearance of one new-comer was only less extraordinary than that of the other. Tahourdin himself altered strangely as he lay and looked at them.

"What's the matter with you, Symes?" he asked, at length, and his voice was very low and hollow.

"Oh, nothing," squeaked the overseer; "only got no wool on the lids of my eyes, in the place where the wool ought to grow. And I'm more than half blind. A little accident, that's all."

"And you, Hutchinson?"

"Can't you see? Got my head broke in the rumpus last night. And I'm hanged if it didn't serve me right!"

He had taken a forward step that did him honour, and was holding out his hand to the prostrate jackeroo. But Tahourdin did not see it. He had turned a livid face towards the manager.

"Get them to go," he begged, in whispers; "you were quite right! I can only stand—one at a time."

When they were once more alone the manager was no longer seated on the bed. He was striding quickly up and down.

"I won't say I'm sorry," he blurted out; "it isn't strong enough. I'm simply sorrier than I ever was for anything in these back-blocks—there! And it was all my fault. Not that I began it. But I took it up. I was so jolly sure of you. And I wanted to make them the same."

There was a moment's pause between the close-clipped sentences. Tahourdin took advantage of it. His voice was stronger.

"Wait a bit," he said. "Tell me where the fraud began."

"From the very start."

"The report about the bushrangers?"

"There never were any."

"And you doctored those cartridges?"

"With my own hands!"

There was a longer pause.

"And who was your spokesman? I didn't recognise the voice."

"You wouldn't; you've never met him. It was a young chap on Quandong whom we roped in at the races."

"And who knocked me out in the end?"

The manager interrupted his walk to come to the bedside and show Tahourdin his knuckles. They were slightly grazed; he looked terribly ashamed of them.

"My dear fellow, it was you or me for it then! I only wish it had been me—to go down. I deserved it; you didn't; you're the pluckiest little demon in New South Wales!"

Tahourdin took the offending hand outstretched to him, but his face had wrinkled with sudden pain.

"Oh, no, I'm not! It was a fraud—a fraud—a fraud!"

And there was all but tragedy in his tone.

"That makes no difference. It was just as plucky of you. It counts the same."

"No," said Tahourdin; "it doesn't count. It's not the same. Oh, to think—it was only a fraud—after all!"

He had closed his eyes very tight, but not tight enough. Glover turned away, but in a moment he was back.

"Will you forgive us, Tahourdin?"

"There's nothing to forgive."

"But there is—you know there is!"

"Then it's forgiven."

But he would not see the others. He wished to be alone: his wish was respected for the rest of that day. And the next, when Glover, who had merely visited him last thing at night, repeated his visit first thing in the morning, the jackeroo was gone!

Of course it was his wounded vanity, and everything else that was paltry and egoistical: the little note confessed it in so many and hard words. But he had taken the liberty of borrowing the night-horse, and he believed that both it and he were just good enough to catch the coach. It was lucky he had received his Christmas remittance by the last mail; this would enable him to pay, among other things, for the borrowed beast's keep at the roadside inn until sent for, and he trusted Glover wouldn't mind his inclosing enough also to defray the further cost of forwarding his trunks to some Melbourne shipping agents whose name he gave. The jackeroo wound up with very simple and hearty thanks for all the manager's kindness, with markedly friendly messages to the other two, but with the equally emphatic assurance that they would never see him on G-Block again.

And they never did.

Building a Skyscraper.

By Ray Stannard Baker.

[*With Photographs taken once a fortnight during the erection.*]

"A STEEL bridge standing on end, with passenger cars running up and down within it."

This is the engaging definition of a "skyscraper" given me by an architect who is as famous for his quaint conceits of speech as he is for his tall buildings.

It seems odd to speak of any building as a new invention, since there have been buildings almost as long as there have been men; and yet the very fact—and curious enough it is when you come to think of it—that the skyscraper is truly more a bridge than a building, and that cars do actually run on perpendicular tracks within it, makes it not only one of the latest feats of the inventor, but one of the very greatest. For thousands of years every large building in the world was constructed with enormous walls of masonry to hold up the inner framework of floors and partitions. It was a substantial and worthy method of construction, and there seemed no need of changing it. But one day a daring builder with an idea astonished the world by reversing this order of construction, and building an inner framework strong enough to hold up the outside walls of masonry. The invention was instantly successful, so that to-day the construction of a tall building is "not architecture," as one writer observes, "but engineering with a stone veneer."

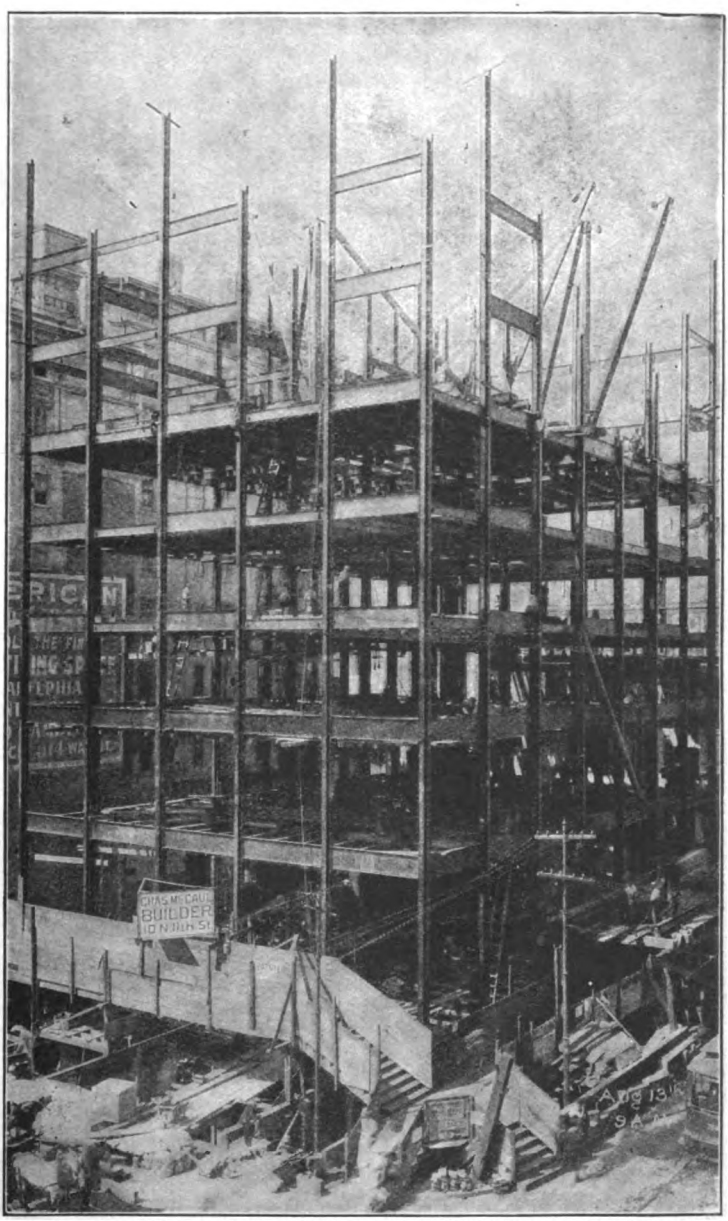
Ten years ago, in 1889, there was not a "skyscraper" in the world; to-day there are scores of them in American cities, the heights varying from seven storeys up to thirty, making them by all odds the greatest structures reared by the hand of man. The idea of constructing a building like a bridge is said to have originated in Chicago; it has, indeed, been given the name "Chicago construction." Some of the earliest buildings embodying the steel-cage idea were the Tacoma (completed in 1889), the Home Insurance, and the Rookery buildings of Chicago, and the Drexel Building in Philadelphia. Nearly all

THE BUILDING OF A SKYSCRAPER—AS IT LOOKED JULY 30TH. THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF PICTURES TAKEN EVERY TWO WEEKS, SHOWING THE REMARKABLE RAPIDITY OF CONSTRUCTION OF A MODERN SKYSCRAPER.

of these were constructed in spite of the opposition and prophecies of failure of scores of experienced builders, often including the building commissioners who issued the permits.

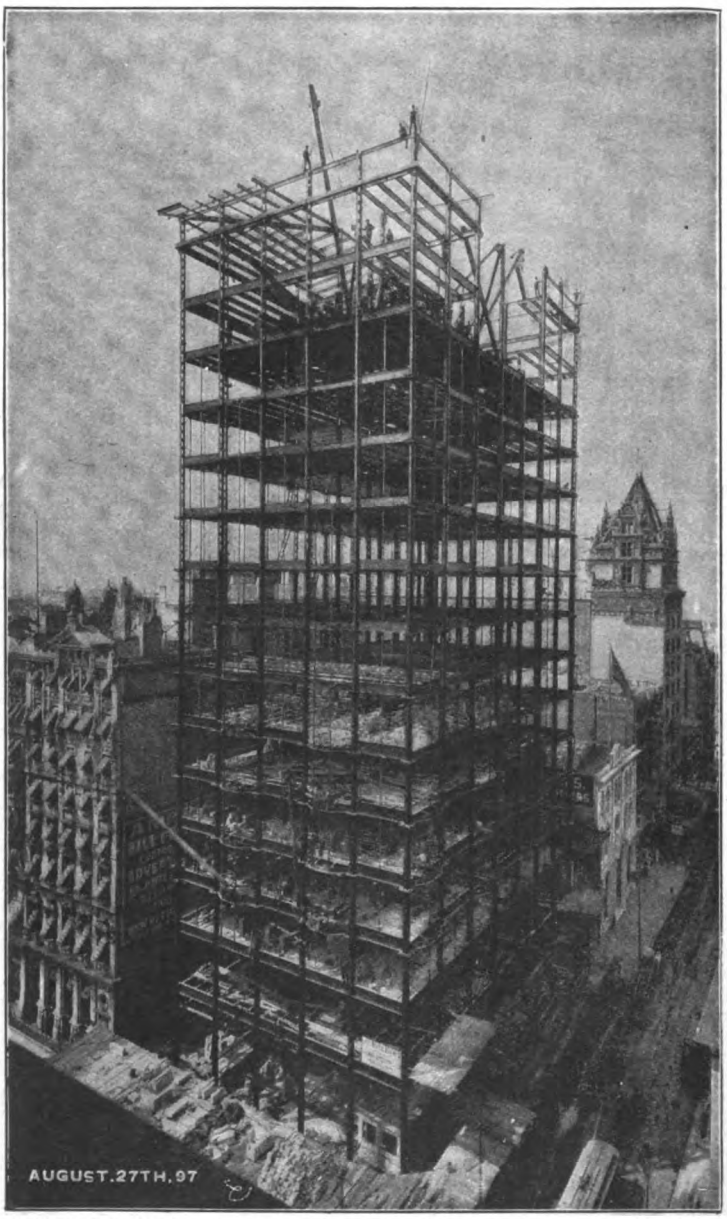
Every invention has its reason for being. Unless it is needed, it does not appear. So with the skyscraper. Great cities had grown with a rapidity unknown anywhere in the world; business centres were much overcrowded; progressive professional men wished to be within easy reach of the districts where money was making fastest. Property-owners said, "We can't spread out, so we must go up." In New York single acres are worth more than 7,000,000dols. Land of this value covered with buildings of ordinary height could not be made to pay. Again the conclusion was resistless: we must go up. Moreover, engineering and the various processes of steel construction had been advancing at great strides, steel was comparatively cheap, and a light skeleton framework cost less in the beginning and required less room than immense masonry walls. And, lastly, and by no means of least importance, the modern elevator had been invented. I remember once talking with a grizzle-headed elevator man in what is now an old skyscraper. He had evidently done some quiet thinking as he travelled up and down year after year on his perpendicular railroad.

"Did you ever think," he asked, "that skyscrapers would be an impossibility without elevators? It's a fact. Nothing above seven or eight storeys without 'em. You'd never catch any business man climbing eight flights to his office."



THE BUILDING OF A SKYSCRAPER—AUGUST 13TH. THE FRAME SEVEN STOREYS ABOVE THE GROUND.

And yet, if the elevator has made the skyscraper a possibility, the skyscraper has in no less degree developed the elevator; both have gone up together, and both would seem to have approached very near to perfection.



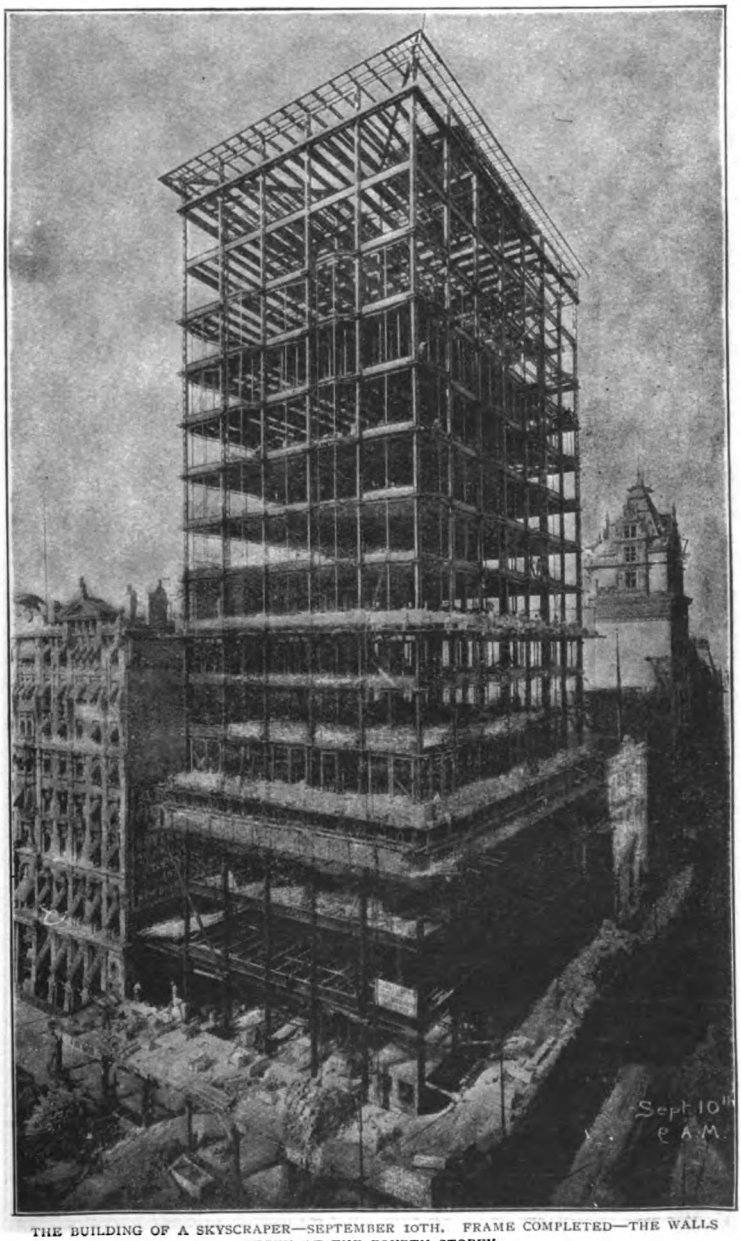
THE BUILDING OF A SKYSCRAPER—AUGUST 27TH. THE FRAME FIFTEEN STOREYS ABOVE THE GROUND.

The building of a modern skyscraper is a mighty task, full of difficult problems, more difficult even than those connected with a great steamship, a great bridge, or even a railroad line. Knowing how far the building is going up, the architect must determine from the character of the ground on which it is to stand how far it must go down. In New York many of the greatest buildings have foundations so deep that they rest on the solid rock 75ft. below the surface, and there are two or three storeys beneath the street, as well as twenty or thirty above. In Chicago all the great buildings rest on what may reasonably be called flat-boats. Indeed, Chicago is a floating city—floating on a bed of soft sand and mud. These boats are made of great timbers, driven straight down, or else of steel rails or steel girders laid criss-cross and filled in with cement until they form a great solid slab of iron and stone. And, as might be expected, these boats frequently tip a little to one side, so that many of the great skyscrapers are slightly out of plumb, like modern towers of Pisa, although they do not lean enough to be at all dangerous. I remember distinctly how a keen-eyed newspaper man made the discovery that one of the most famous skyscrapers in the world—and one of the largest—was out of plumb. He was in the sixteenth storey of the building across the street. The doctor who occupied the room had tied a weight to a window-cord in order to keep the shade well down, thus making it a plumb-bob. It so happened that the newspaper man glanced along this cord and across the street to the corner of the great building opposite. At first he couldn't believe his eyes: the cord was certainly plumb, or else all the school-books were incorrect; therefore the building must certainly be leaning to one side. He called several friends, and each of them bore him out in his observation. He rushed

off in great feather, secured an engineer, and had careful measurements taken. The building was found to lean 9in. to the eastward at the top, and there was a news "beat" in one of the newspapers the next morning.

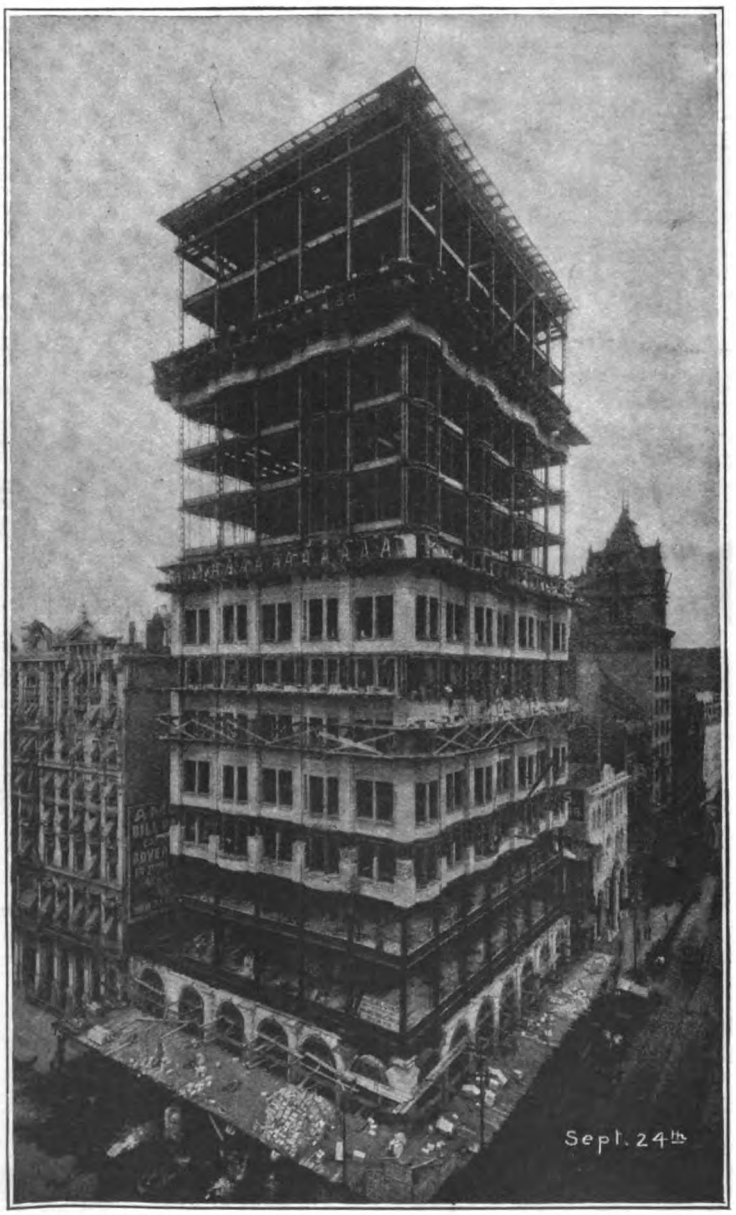
All the great buildings are expected to settle, and the main effort is to make this settlement uniform throughout. In New York the tall buildings which rest on a foundation of fine wet sand have all settled from one-quarter to nine-sixteenths of an inch. The Marquette Building, Chicago, and the St. Paul Building, New York, have provisions made at the bases of their columns for lifting them up with powerful hydraulic presses and inserting packing of steel should they settle too much.

And thus it will be seen how difficult and delicate a problem the builder must meet in securing a solid foundation for the end of his bridge which goes into the ground. He must know, not only just how much the entire building will weigh, almost to a ton, but he must know the weight of each part of it, so that the load may be equally distributed over the foundation, thereby preventing any tendency to tip over He must also compute the "live" weight which his building is expected to carry, that is, the furniture, the safes, the tenants themselves. And in Chicago, where the foundation is clay, he must not put a weight of more than one and one-half to two tons on every square foot of surface; the solid rock of New York will bear more. Moreover, he must determine exactly how much strain each steel girder, each column, even each rivet, will bear. If he overloads any single girder, he endangers his whole building. Then he must calculate how much wind is going to blow against his building, and from what direction most of it is coming; he must make provisions for supplying water to the



THE BUILDING OF A SKYSCRAPER—SEPTEMBER 10TH. FRAME COMPLETED—THE WALLS BEGUN AT THE FOURTH STOREY.

top storeys where the city cannot pump it; he must provide amply against possible fires—and that's one of the most difficult of all the problems; he must see to the prevention of rust in his steel work; he must secure proper ventilation and lighting, so that every room has its windows with a street front if possible; he must even calculate on the pounding of horses' hoofs and heavy waggons on the street outside; and, more difficult than all else, he must keep well within the hampering limits of the city's building laws. These are only a few of thousands of intricate details, not to consider the tremendous question of cost with which the builder must grapple; and even then it sometimes happens that he is blamed if he does not make this tower of steel, with its hundreds of rectangular windows, a thing of architectural grace and beauty.



THE BUILDING OF A SKYSCRAPER—SEPTEMBER 24TH. THE WALLS BEGUN AT FIVE DIFFERENT POINTS.

The illustrations which we give with this article show admirably the progress of building a skyscraper.

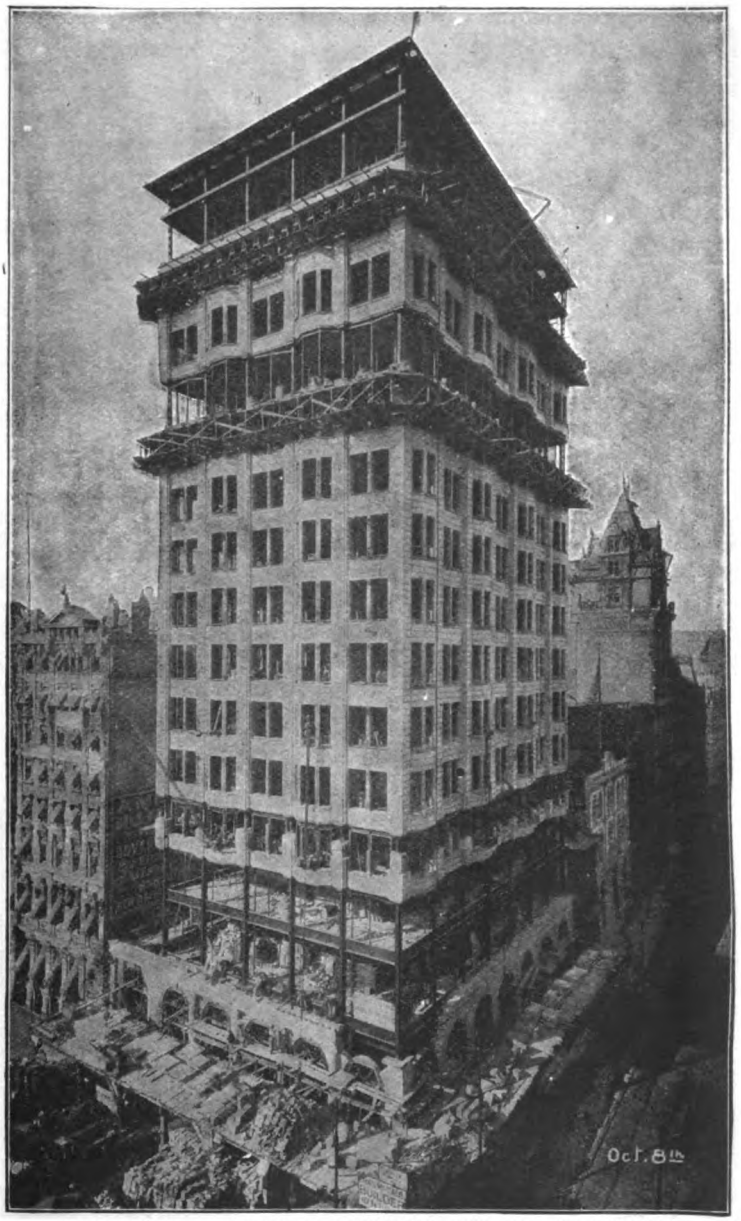
Perhaps it will be possible to give the best idea of what such a building really is, when completed, by relating some of the important facts about what is now the greatest modern building — indeed, the tallest inhabited building in the world—the Park Row Building in New York City. It was designed by R. H. Robertson, and it stands as one of the greatest monuments to the daring and enterprise of the American builder. It can be seen from far out in New Jersey, from Staten Island, from Long Island, and the look-out of every ship that enters the harbour sees it looming like a huge tower above its neighbours.

To begin with, it has twenty-nine storeys, and its height from the sidewalk to the tops of the cupolas on the towers is 390ft. Thus it is over 100ft. taller than the dome of the Capitol at Washington, 85ft. above the Statue of Liberty, and within a very few feet of the

extreme height of the Pyramids. Even these figures do not represent its full proportions. The flag-poles on top of the building are 57ft. in height. The foundations extend 54ft. below the surface. Therefore, from the base of its foundations to the top of its flag-poles the new building spans 501ft., or nearly the tenth of a mile.

The restaurant, on the top of the main building, is 308ft. above the street, while the topmost offices, and they are all large, comfortable rooms, are 340ft. in air. Their windows command a view of over forty miles.

The new building has a frontage of 103ft. on the street which it faces, of 23ft. on a side street, and of 47ft. on a rear alley. It may, therefore, be said to look in three directions. It is nearly four times as high as its main frontage. The difficulty presented by that proportion is an architectural problem of some magnitude in itself.



THE BUILDING OF A SKYSCRAPER—OCTOBER 8TH. THE WALLS HALF FINISHED.

It need not be said that a vast amount of steel and stone, glass, and other material enter into the construction of such a building. As a matter of fact, the building weighs about 20,000 tons. The material of which it is constructed would build all the houses of an ordinary suburban town, with enough left over to construct a good-sized church.

As with all skyscrapers, the foundation of the Park Row Building is its most interesting, as well as its most perplexing, feature. Several acres of Georgia timberland were denuded to furnish the 1,200 great pine piles, some of them 40ft. long, which were driven into the sand of the site. These piles are in rows, two feet apart, under the vertical columns which support the building. They were driven into the ground as far as they would go under the blows of a one-ton hammer. They are thus prepared to sustain a weight of 20 tons, although the most that will be

THE BUILDING OF A SKYSCRAPER—OCTOBER 22ND. THE ROOF IN PROGRESS.

put upon them is about 16 tons, a margin great enough to give any builder a sense of safety. Moreover, they are below the water-line, so that they are indestructible by the ordinary process of decay.

When the piles were driven as far as possible their tops were cut off, and the sand was cleared away for a foot down around their tops and concrete was poured about them, forming a solid rock surface, resting securely upon their tops. On this concrete base were laid large blocks of granite, and above them the brick piers of the building.

The weight of the building is not allowed to come directly upon the granite capstones which surmount these piers. Instead, it is distributed by the system of steel girders, some of them 8ft. in depth and 47ft. long. These are, in effect, big bridges, placed between the foundations and the footings of the vertical columns to distribute the weight evenly. The heaviest girder in the building, which lies deep beneath one wall of the building, weighs over 52 tons.

Above the surface the building is a mere steel framework — a big steel box — built like a cantilever bridge. The walls are comparatively light, being hardly more than thin sheeting for the skeleton, and, curiously enough, the stonework of the second and some of the higher storeys was constructed before the wall foundations were laid, being entirely supported by the steel framework.

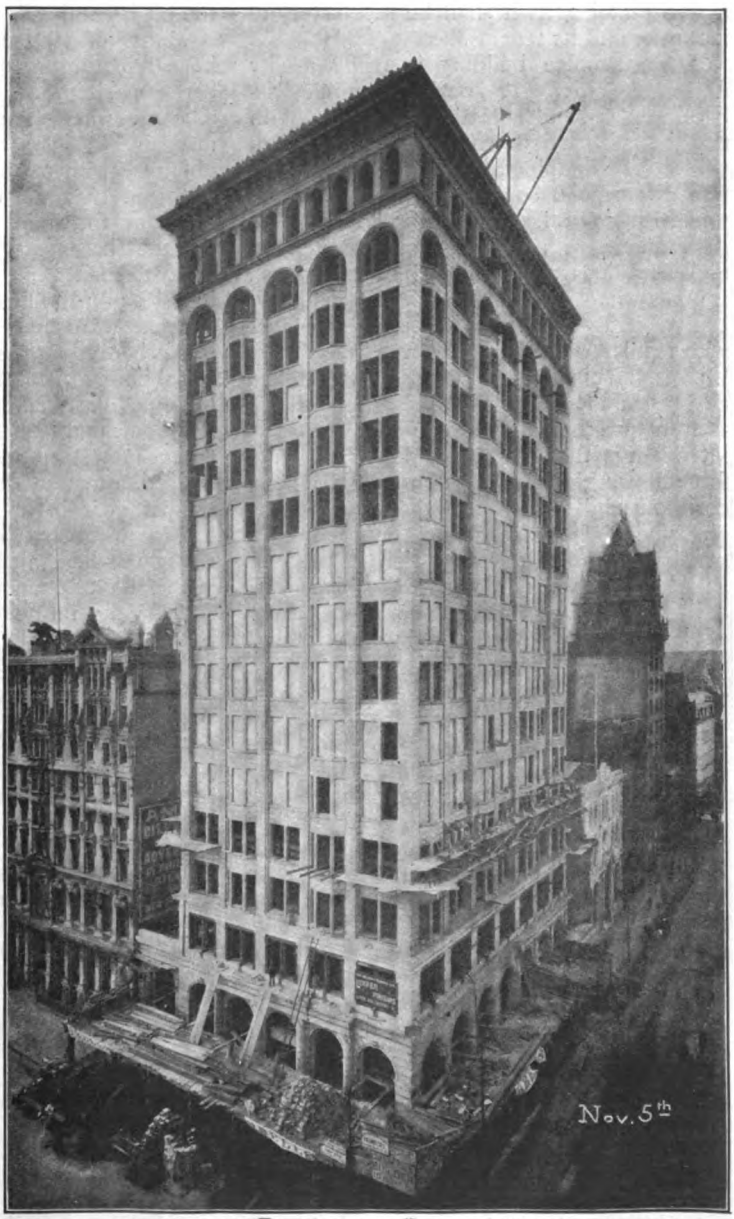
As I said before, the dead weight of the building itself is about 20,000 tons. But with the addition of the maximum load which the twenty-nine floors are calculated to carry, the total weight of the structure will amount to something like 61,400 tons. There are 950 rooms in the building. Counting four persons to each office, this will make the permanent population of the building nearly 4,000, or equal to that of many a flourishing little town. To this

must be added a large transient population amounting probably to one person for each resident at any given time during business hours. This would make an ordinary population, resident and floating, of 8,000 for this one building! If twenty persons visit each office during the day, there would be 27,000 persons using the building every day. In other words, an army as large as that of the United States march in and out of the building between daylight and dark. The various elevators have daily passenger traffic of over 60,000, or more than that of many an important railway line.

It is a curious reflection that if the regular occupants of the building were placed shoulder to shoulder on the ground that it occupies there would be barely standing-room for them; while if all the persons who visit the building during a day were gathered on the ground site at one time they would make a group standing five deep on one another's heads.

The cost of the building was 2,400,000 dollars, but it will collect more in revenues every year than many a populous county. If a building as high and as large could have been constructed by the old solid masonry process it would have cost fourteen times as much, and the walls would have been so thick at the base that there would have been little or no room for offices and stores.

The time may come, and come soon, when buildings higher even than this one may be built. There is nothing in the engineering problem to prevent the construction of a fifty-storey building, but such a sight will probably never vex the eye of man. Already various American cities are passing laws limiting the height of buildings. Moreover, many property-owners feel that time should be given to ascertain how the skyscraper will endure —whether the steel will weaken with rust, whether the foundations will hold true,



THE BUILDING OF A SKYSCRAPER—NOVEMBER 5TH. THE EXTERIOR PRACTICALLY COMPLETED.

whether the fire-proofing is efficient. Most sky-scrapers are only a few years old; although examinations of steel columns erected ten years ago and housed in cement, and of foundation beams lying below the water-line, have shown that not even the blue-black scale from the rolling-mill finish has turned colour. Wherever it is possible, these steels are buried in cement, in itself a rust-proofing, and under such conditions the steel-constructed building promises to stand as long as the building itself shall be satisfactory to its owner and its tenants.

A great office building is really a city under one roof. It has its own electric-lighting plant, and sometimes a gas plant in addition; it has its own water-works system, with a big standpipe at the top to supply the upper floors, and sometimes an artesian well underneath; it has its own well-drilled fire department, with fire-plugs on every floor, and hose-lines and chemical extinguishers; it has its own police department, for every great building is now supplied with regular detectives, who watch for petty thieves and pickpockets and prevent peddlers and beggars from entering their domain. It is even governed like a city; for the superintendent is the mayor, and he has a large force of workmen always busy cleaning the corridors and stairways of the big structure. In some of the Chicago buildings, where a peculiar glazed terra-cotta brick is used for sheathing, the walls are washed outside as well as in. In its elevators it has a complete system of electric railroads, and a very wonderful and intricate system it is, too, with automatic arrangements for opening and shutting doors, for indicating exactly where the car is in its ascent and descent, and for preventing accidents from falling. And there is in many of the greatest buildings a complete express service of cars, some cars not stopping below the tenth or some other skyward floor. A number of buildings there are that have their own telephone system, as well as connections throughout without the city lines, its pneumatic-tube parcel and message delivery, and at least one has a system of pipes conveying compressed air for power, while every great skyscraper is provided with one or more telegraph, cable, and district messenger offices, so that a tenant sitting at his desk can send a message almost anywhere on earth by merely pushing a button-call for a messenger. In the modern mail-chute—a long glass and iron tube through which a tenant on any floor may drop a letter to the big box in the basement—the sky-scraper has its own mail system. A young Englishman, a friend of mine, who was on his first visit to New York, stood for half an hour watching the letters flit downward through one of these glass tubes.

"That is the most wonderful thing I've seen in America," he said; "that and the little tube with red oil in it which tells when the lift is coming."

Many of the modern buildings now have a bathroom on every floor, a regular barber's shop, a restaurant on the roof, a stand where the latest newspapers and magazines, cigars and candies, may be obtained, with frequently a library to which a tenant may go when looking up references or to while away an idle half-hour. In the basement there is frequently a safety-deposit vault and a place for storing bicycles; on the first floor, a bank where a business man may keep his money; and somewhere up at the top, not so frequently, a social club. And of late some of the great buildings have actually been provided with bedrooms and bachelor apartments, so that a tenant may sleep near his offices if he is busy. Indeed, a man might live in a modern sky-scraper year in and year out, luxuriously, too, with every want richly supplied, and never pass beyond the revolving storm doors at the street entrance.

As to the future of the skyscraper no one knows definitely, but all the architects prophesy greater beauty. They are learning how to treat these great slim towers so that the effect is pleasing to the eye. In times past the necessity of a façade from 250ft. to 350ft. high has often resulted in the bold, staring resemblance to a chimney, which is both ugly and painful to the sight. But the architect is learning to relieve this tendency by treating the storeys in groups of four or five. This lessens the effect of extreme height. At the same time the width is made to seem greater than it really is by the addition of heavy cornices and projecting balconies.

While it is perhaps too much to expect that a skyscraper shall become an object of beauty, these various devices do much to give the building personality and distinction, and perhaps this is as far as the architect ever can go.

The Brass Bottle.

By F. Anstey.

Author of "Vice-Versâ," etc., etc.

CHAPTER IX.

"PERSICOS ODI, PUER, APPARATUS."

"SO you've found your way here at last?" said Horace, as he shook hands heartily with the Professor and Mrs. Futvoye. "I can't tell you how delighted I am to see you."

As a matter of fact, he was very far from being at ease, which made him rather over-effusive, but he was determined that, if he could help it, he would not betray the slightest consciousness of anything *bizarre* or unusual in his domestic arrangements.

"And these," said Mrs. Futvoye, who was extremely stately in black, with old lace and steel embroidery—"these are the bachelor lodgings you were so modest about! Really," she added, with a humorous twinkle in her shrewd eyes, "you young men seem to understand how to make yourselves comfortable—don't they, Anthony?"

"WHERE DID YOU GET THAT MAGNIFICENT DRESSING-GOWN?"

"They do, indeed," said the Professor, drily, though it manifestly cost him some effort to conceal his appreciation. "To produce such results as these must, if I mistake not, have entailed infinite research—and considerable expense."

"No," said Horace, "no. You—you'd be surprised if you knew how little."

"I should have imagined," retorted the Professor, "that *any* outlay on apartments which I presume you do not contemplate occupying for an extended period must be money thrown away. But, doubtless, you know best."

"But your rooms are quite wonderful, Horace!" cried Sylvia, her charming eyes dilating with admiration. "And where, *where* did you get that magnificent dressing-gown? I never saw anything so lovely in my life!"

She herself was lovely enough in a billowy, shimmering frock of a delicate apple-green hue, her only ornament a deep-blue Egyptian scarab with spread wings, which was suspended from her neck by a slender gold chain.

"I—I ought to apologize for receiving you in this costume," said Horace, with embarrassment; "but the fact is, I couldn't find my evening clothes anywhere, so—so I put on the first things that came to hand."

"It is hardly necessary," said the Professor, conscious of being correctly clad, and unconscious that his shirt-front was bulging and his long-eared white tie beginning to work up towards his left ear; "hardly necessary to offer any apology for the simplicity of your costume—which is entirely in keeping with the—ah—strictly Oriental character of your interior."

"*I* feel dreadfully out of keeping!" said Sylvia, "for there's nothing in the least Oriental about *me*—unless it's my scarab—and he's I don't know how many centuries behind the time, poor dear!"

"If you said 'thousands of years,' my dear," corrected the Professor, "you would be more accurate. That scarab was taken out of a tomb of the thirteenth dynasty."

"Well, I'm sure he'd rather be where he is," said Sylvia, and Ventimore entirely agreed

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with her. "Horace, I *must* look at everything. How clever and original of you to transform an ordinary London house into this!"

"Oh, well, you see," explained Horace, "it—it wasn't exactly done by me."

"Whoever did it," said the Professor, "must have devoted considerable study to Eastern art and architecture. May I ask the name of the firm who executed the alterations?"

"I really couldn't tell you, sir," answered Horace, who was beginning to understand how very bad a *mauvais quart d'heure* can be.

"You can't tell me!" exclaimed the Professor. "You order these extensive, and *I* should say expensive, decorations, and you don't know the firm you selected to carry them out!"

"Of course I *know*," said Horace, "only I don't happen to remember at this moment. Let me see, now. Was it Liberty? No, I'm almost certain it wasn't Liberty. It might have been Maple, but I'm not sure. Whoever did do it, they were marvellously cheap."

"I am glad to hear it," said the Professor, in his most unpleasant tone. "Where is your dining-room?"

"Why, I rather think," said Horace, helplessly, as he saw a train of attendants laying a round cloth on the floor, "I rather think *this* is the dining-room."

"You appear to be in some doubt?" said the Professor.

"I leave it to them—it depends where they choose to lay the cloth," said Horace. "Sometimes in one place; sometimes in another. There's a great charm in uncertainty," he faltered.

"Doubtless," said the Professor. By this time two of the slaves, under the direction of a tall and turbaned black, had set a low ebony stool, inlaid with silver and tortoise-shell in strange devices, on the round carpet, when other attendants followed with a circular silver tray containing covered dishes, which they placed on the stool and salaamed.

"Your—ah—groom of the chambers," said the Professor, "seems to have decided that we should dine here. I observe they are making signs to you that the food is on the table."

"So it is," said Ventimore. "Shall we sit down?"

"But, my dear Horace," said Mrs. Futvoye, "your butler has forgotten the chairs!"

"You don't appear to realize, my dear," said the Professor, "that in such an interior as this chairs would be glaringly incongruous."

"I'm afraid there aren't any," said Horace, for there was nothing but four fat cushions. "Let's sit down on these," he proposed. "It—it's more fun!"

"At my time of life," said the Professor, irritably, as he let himself down on the plumpest cushion, "such fun as may be derived from eating one's meals on the floor fails to appeal to my sense of humour. However, I admit that it is thoroughly Oriental——"

"*I* think it's delightful," said Sylvia; "ever so much nicer than a stiff, conventional dinner-party."

"One may be unconventional," remarked her father, "without escaping the penalty of stiffness. Go away, sir! go away!" he added, snappishly, to one of the slaves, who was attempting to pour water over his hands. "Your servant, Ventimore, appears to imagine that I go out to dinner without taking the

"GO AWAY, SIR! GO AWAY!"

trouble to wash my hands previously. This, I may mention, is *not* the case."

"It's only an Eastern ceremony, Professor," said Horace.

"I am perfectly well aware of what is customary in the East," retorted the Professor; "it does not follow that such—ah—hygienic precautions are either necessary or desirable at a Western table."

Horace made no reply; he was too much occupied in gazing blankly at the silver dish-covers and wondering what in the world might be underneath; nor was his perplexity relieved when the covers were removed, for he was quite at a loss to guess how he was supposed to help the contents without so much as a fork.

The chief attendant, however, solved that difficulty by intimating in pantomime that the guests were expected to use their fingers.

Sylvia accomplished this daintily and with intense amusement, but her father and mother made no secret of their repugnance. "If I were dining in the desert with a Sheik, sir," observed the Professor, "I should, I hope, know how to conform to his habits and prejudices. Here, in the heart of London, I confess all this strikes me as a piece of needless pedantry."

"I'm very sorry," said Horace; "I'd have some knives and forks if I could—but I'm afraid these fellows don't even understand what they are, so it's useless to order any. We—we must rough it a little, that's all. I hope that—er—fish is all right, Professor?"

He did not know precisely what kind of fish it was, but it was fried in oil of sesame and flavoured with a mixture of cinnamon and ginger, and the Professor did not appear to be making much progress with it. Ventimore himself would have infinitely preferred the original cod and oyster sauce, but that could not be helped now.

"Thank you," said the Professor, "it is curious—but characteristic. Not *any* more, thank you."

Horace could only trust that the next course would be more of a success. It was a dish of mutton, stewed with peaches, jujubes, and sugar, which Sylvia declared was delicious. Her parents made no comment.

"Might I ask for something to drink?" said the Professor, presently, whereupon a cupbearer poured him a goblet of iced sherbet perfumed with conserve of violets.

"I'm very sorry, my dear fellow," he said, after sipping it, "but if I drink this, I shall be ill all next day. If I might have a glass of wine——"

Another slave instantly handed him a cup of wine, which he tasted and set down with a wry face and a shudder. Horace tried some afterwards, and was not surprised. It was a strong, harsh wine, in which goat-skin and resin struggled for predominance.

"It's an old and, I make no doubt, a fine wine," observed the Pro-

"IF I DRINK THIS I SHALL BE ILL."

fessor, with studied politeness, "but I fancy it must have suffered in transportation. I really think that, with my gouty tendency, a little whisky and Apollinaris would be better for me—if you keep such Occidental fluids in the house?"

Horace felt convinced that it would be useless to order the slaves to bring whisky or Apollinaris, which were, of course, unknown in the Jinnee's time, so he could do nothing but apologize for their absence.

"No matter," said the Professor; "I am not so thirsty that I cannot wait till I get home."

It was some consolation that both Sylvia and her mother commended the sherbet, and even appreciated—or were so obliging as to say they appreciated — the *entrée*, which consisted of rice and mincemeat wrapped in vine leaves, and certainly was not appetizing in appearance, besides being difficult to dispose of gracefully.

It was followed by a whole lamb fried in oil, stuffed with pounded pistachio nuts, pepper, nutmeg, and coriander seeds, and liberally besprinkled with rosewater and musk.

Only Horace had sufficient courage to attack the lamb—and he found reason to regret it. Afterwards came fowls stuffed with raisins, parsley, and crumbled bread, and the banquet ended with pastry of weird forms and repellent aspect.

"I hope," said Horace, anxiously, "you don't find this Eastern cookery very—er—unpalatable?"—he himself was feeling distinctly unwell; "it's rather a change from the ordinary routine."

"I have made a truly wonderful dinner, thank you," replied the Professor, not, it is to be feared, without intention. "Even in the East I have eaten nothing approaching this."

"But where did your landlady pick up this extraordinary cooking, my dear Horace?" said Mrs. Futvoye. "I thought you said she was merely a plain cook. Has she ever lived in the East?"

"Not exactly *in* the East," exclaimed Horace; "not what you would call *living* there. The fact is," he continued, feeling that he was in danger of drivelling, and that he had better be as candid as he could, "this dinner *wasn't* cooked by her. She—she was obliged to go away quite suddenly. So the dinner was all sent in by—by a sort of contractor, you know. He supplies the whole thing, waiters and all."

"I was thinking," said the Professor, "that for a bachelor—an *engaged* bachelor—you seemed to maintain rather a large establishment."

"Oh, they're only here for the evening, sir," said Horace. "Capital fellows—more picturesque than the local greengrocer—and they don't breathe on the top of your head."

"They're perfect dears, Horace!" remarked Sylvia; "only—well, just a *little* creepy-crawly to look at!"

"It would ill become me to criticise the style and method of our entertainment," put in the Professor, acidly, "otherwise I might be tempted to observe that it scarcely showed that regard for economy which I should have——"

"Now, Anthony," put in his wife, "don't let us have any fault-finding. I'm sure Horace has done it all delightfully—yes, delightfully; and even if he *has* been just a little extravagant, it's not as if he was obliged to be as economical *now*, you know!"

"My dear," said the Professor, "I have yet to learn that the prospect of an increased income in the remote future is any justification for reckless profusion in the present."

"If you only knew," said Horace, "you wouldn't call it profusion. It—it's not at all the dinner I meant it to be, and I'm afraid it wasn't particularly nice—but it's certainly not expensive."

"'Expensive' is, of course, a very relative term. But I think I have the right to ask whether this is the footing on which you propose to begin your married life?"

It was an extremely awkward question, as the reader will perceive. If Ventimore replied—as he might with truth—that he had no intention whatever of maintaining his wife in luxury such as that, he stood convicted of selfish indulgence as a bachelor; if, on the other hand, he declared that he *did* propose to maintain his wife in the same fantastic and exaggerated splendour as the present, it would certainly confirm her father's disbelief in his prudence and economy.

And it was that egregious old ass of a Jinnee, as Horace thought, with suppressed rage, who had let him in for all this, and who was now far beyond all remonstrance or reproach!

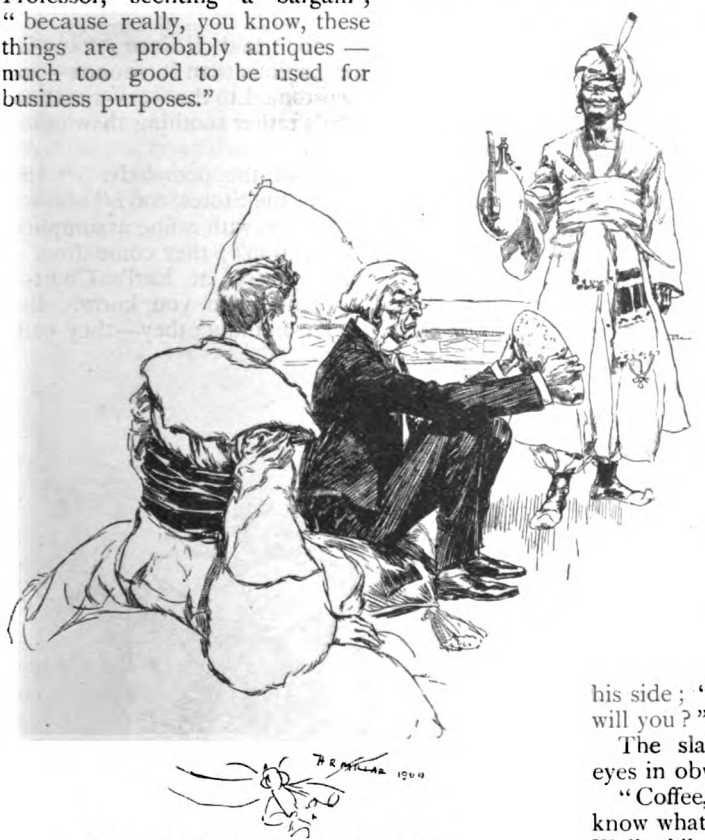
Before he could bring himself to answer the question, the attendants had noiselessly removed the tray and stool, and were handing round rosewater in a silver ewer and basin, the character of which, luckily or otherwise, turned the Professor's inquisitiveness into a different channel.

"These are not bad—really not bad at

all," he said, inspecting the design. "Where did you manage to pick them up?"

"I didn't," said Horace; "they're provided by the—the person who supplies the dinner."

"Can you give me his address?" said the Professor, scenting a bargain; "because really, you know, these things are probably antiques—much too good to be used for business purposes."



"THESE THINGS ARE PROBABLY ANTIQUES."

"I'm wrong," said Horace, lamely; "these particular things are—are lent, by an eccentric Oriental gentleman, as a great favour."

"Do I know him? Is he a collector of such things?"

"You wouldn't have met him; he—he's lived a very retired life of late."

"I should very much like to see his collection. If you could give me a letter of introduction——"

"No," said Horace, in a state of prickly heat; "it wouldn't be any use. His collection is never shown. He—he's a most peculiar man. And just now he's abroad."

"Ah! pardon me if I've been indiscreet; but I concluded from what you said that this—ah—banquet was furnished by a professional caterer."

"Oh, the banquet? Yes, *that* came from the Stores," said Horace, mendaciously. "The—the Oriental Cookery Department. They've just started it, you know; so—so I thought I'd give them a trial. But it's not what I call properly organized yet."

The slaves were now, with low obeisances, inviting them to seat themselves on the divan which lined part of the hall.

"Ha!" said the Professor, as he rose from his cushion, cracking audibly, "so we're to have our coffee and what not over there, hey? . . . Well, my boy, I sha'n't be sorry, I confess, to have something to lean my back against—and a cigar, a mild cigar, will—ah!—aid digestion. You *do* smoke here?"

"Smoke?" said Horace. "Why, of course! All over the place. Here," he said, clapping his hands, which brought an obsequious slave instantly to his side; "just bring coffee and cigars, will you?"

The slave rolled his brandy-ball eyes in obvious perplexity.

"Coffee," said Horace; "you must know what coffee is. And cigarettes. Well, *chibouks*, then—'hubble-bubbles'—if that's what you call them."

But the slave clearly did not understand, and it suddenly struck Horace that, since tobacco and coffee were not introduced, even into the East, till long after the Jinnee's time, he, as the founder of the feast, would naturally be unaware how indispensable they had become at the present day.

"I'm really awfully sorry," he said; "but they don't seem to have provided any. I shall speak to the manager about it. And, unfortunately, I don't know where my own cigars are."

"It's of no consequence," said the Professor, with the sort of stoicism that minds very much. "I am a moderate smoker at best, and Turkish coffee, though delicious, is apt to keep me awake. But if you could let me have a look at that brass bottle you got at poor Collingham's sale, I should be obliged to you."

Horace had no idea where it was then, nor could he, until the Professor came to the rescue with a few words of Arabic, manage to make the slaves comprehend what he wished them to find.

At length, however, two of them appeared, bearing the brass bottle with every sign of awe, and depositing it at Ventimore's feet.

Professor Futvoye, after wiping and adjusting his glasses, proceeded to examine the vessel. "It certainly is a most unusual type of brassware," he said, "as unique in its way as the silver ewer and basin; and, as you thought, there does seem to be something resembling an inscription on the cap, though in this dim light it is almost impossible to be sure."

While he was poring over it, Horace seated himself on the divan by Sylvia's side, hoping for one of the whispered conversations permitted to affianced lovers; he had pulled through the banquet somehow, and on the whole he felt thankful things had not gone off worse. The noiseless and uncanny attendants, whom he did not know whether to regard as Efreets, or demons, or simply illusions, but whose services he had no wish to retain, had all withdrawn. Mrs. Futvoye was peacefully slumbering, and her husband was in a better humour than he had been all the evening.

Suddenly from behind the hangings of one of the archways came strange, discordant sounds, barbaric janglings and thumpings, varied by yowls as of impassioned cats.

Sylvia drew involuntarily closer to Horace; her mother woke with a start, and the Professor looked up from the brass bottle with returning irritation.

"What's this? What's this?" he demanded; "some fresh surprise in store for us?"

It was quite as much of a surprise for Horace, but he was spared the humiliation of owning it by the entrance of some half-dozen dusky musicians swathed in white and carrying various strangely fashioned instruments, with which they squatted down in a semi-circle by the opposite wall, and began to twang, and drub, and squall with the complacent cacophony of an Eastern orchestra. Clearly Fakrash was determined that nothing should be wanting to make the entertainment a complete success.

"What a very extraordinary noise!" said Mr. Futvoye; "surely they can't mean it for music?"

"Yes, they do," said Horace; "it—it's really more harmonious than it sounds—you have to get accustomed to the—er—notation. When you do, it's rather soothing than otherwise."

"I daresay," said the poor lady. "And do *they* come from the Stores, too?"

"No," said Horace, with a fine assumption of candour, "they don't; they come from—the Arab Encampment at Earl's Court—parties and *fêtes* attended, you know. But they play *here* for nothing; they—they want

"DUSKY MUSICIANS."

to get their name known, you see; very deserving and respectable set of fellows."

"My dear Horace!" remarked Mrs. Futvoye, "if they expect to get engagements for parties and so on, they really ought to try and learn a tune of *some* sort."

"I understand, Horace," whispered Sylvia; "it's very naughty of you to have gone to all this trouble and expense (for, of course, it *has* cost you a lot) just to please us—but, whatever dad may say, I love you all the better for doing it."

And her hand stole softly into his, and he felt that he could forgive Fakrash everything—even the orchestra.

"SHE BEGAN TO DANCE WITH A SLOW AND SINUOUS GRACE."

But there was something unpleasantly spectral about their shadowy forms, which showed in grotesquely baggy and bulgy shapes in the uncertain light. All of them wore immense and curious white head-dresses, which gave them the appearance of poulticed thumbs; and they all went on scraping and twiddling and caterwauling with a doleful monotony that Horace felt must be getting on his guests' nerves, as it certainly was on his own.

He did not know how to get rid of them, but he sketched a kind of gesture in the air, intended to intimate that, while their efforts had afforded the keenest pleasure to the company generally, they were unwilling to monopolize them any longer, and the artists were at liberty to retire.

Perhaps there is no art more liable to misconstruction than pantomime; certainly, Ventimore's efforts in this direction were misunderstood, for the music became wilder, louder, more aggressively and abominably out of tune—and then a worse thing happened.

For the curtains separated, and, heralded by sharp yelps from the performers, a female figure floated into the hall and began to dance with a slow and sinuous grace.

Her beauty, though of a pronounced Oriental type, was unmistakable, even in the subdued light which fell on her; her diaphanous robe indicated a faultless form; her dark tresses were braided with sequins; she had the long, lustrous eyes, the dusky cheeks artificially whitened, and the fixed scarlet smile of the Eastern dancing-girl of all time.

And she paced the floor with her tinkling feet, writhing and undulating like some

beautiful cobra, while the players worked themselves up to yet higher and higher stages of frenzy.

Ventimore, as he sat there looking helplessly on, felt a return of his resentment against the Jinnee. It was really too bad of him; he ought, at his age, to have known better!

Not that there was anything objectionable in the performance itself; but still, it was *not* the kind of entertainment for such an occasion. Horace wished now he had mentioned to Fakrash who the guests were whom he expected, and then perhaps even the Jinnee would have exercised more tact in his arrangements.

"And does this girl come from Earl's Court?" inquired Mrs. Futvoye, who was now thoroughly awake.

"Oh, dear, no," said Horace; "I engaged *her* at — at Harrod's — the Entertainment Bureau. They told me there she was rather good—struck out a line of her own, don't you know. But perfectly correct; she—she only does this to support an invalid aunt."

These statements were, as he felt even in making them, not only gratuitous, but utterly unconvincing; but he had arrived at that condition in which a man discovers with terror the unsuspected amount of mendacity latent in his system.

"SHE SANK IN A GAUZY HEAP AT HIS FEET."

"I should have thought there were other ways of supporting invalid aunts," remarked Mrs. Futvoye. "What is this young lady's name?"

"Tinkler," said Horace, on the spur of the moment. "Miss Clementine Tinkler."

"But surely she is a foreigner?"

"'Mademoiselle,' I *meant* to say. And Tinkla—with an 'a,' you know. I believe her mother was of Arabian extraction—but I really don't know," explained Horace, conscious that Sylvia had withdrawn her hand from his, and was regarding him with covert anxiety.

"I really *must* put a stop to this," he thought. "You're getting bored by all this, darling," he said, aloud, "so am I. I'll tell them to go." And he rose and held out his hand as a sign that the dance should cease.

It ceased at once; but, to his unspeakable horror, the dancer crossed the floor with a swift jingling rush, and sank in a gauzy heap at his feet, seizing his hand in both hers and covering it with kisses, while she murmured speeches in some tongue unknown to him.

"Is this a usual feature in Miss Tinkla's entertainments, may I ask?" said Mrs. Futvoye, bristling with not unnatural indignation.

"I really don't know," said the unhappy Horace; "I can't make out what she's saying."

"If I understand her rightly," said the Professor, "she is addressing you as the 'light of her eyes and the vital spirit of her heart.'"

"Oh!" said Horace, "she's quite mis-

taken, you know. It — it's the emotional artist temperament — they don't *mean* anything by it. My — my dear young lady," he added, "you've danced most delightfully, and I'm sure we're all most deeply indebted to you; but we won't detain you any longer. Professor," he added, as she made no offer to rise, "*will* you kindly explain to them in Arabic that I should be obliged by their going at once?"

The Professor said a few words, which had the desired effect. The girl gave a little scream and scudded through the archway, and the musicians seized their instruments and scuttled after her.

"I am so sorry," said Horace, whose evening seemed to him to have been chiefly spent in apologies; "it's not at all the kind of entertainment one would expect from a place like Whiteley's."

"By no means," agreed the Professor; "but I understood you to say Miss Tinkla was recommended to you by Harrod's?"

"Very likely, sir," said Horace; "but that doesn't affect the case. I shouldn't expect it from *them*."

"Probably they don't know how shamelessly that young person conducts herself," said Mrs. Futvoye. "And I think it only right that they should be told."

"I shall complain, of course," said Horace. "I shall put it very strongly."

"A protest would have more weight coming from a woman," said Mrs. Futvoye; "and, as a shareholder in the company, I shall feel bound——"

"No, I wouldn't," said Horace; "in fact, you mustn't. For, now I come to think of it, she didn't come from Harrod's, after all, or Whiteley's either."

"Then perhaps you will be good enough to inform us where she *did* come from?"

"I would if I knew," said Horace; "but I don't."

"What!" cried the Professor, sharply, "do you mean to say you can't account for the existence of a dancing-girl who — in my daughter's presence—kisses your hand and addresses you by endearing epithets?"

"Oriental metaphor!" said Horace. "She was a little overstrung. Of course, if I had had any idea she would make such a scene as that——Sylvia," he broke off, "*you* don't doubt me?"

"No, Horace," said Sylvia, simply, "I'm sure you must have *some* explanation — only I do think it would be better if you gave it."

"If I *told* you the truth," said Horace, slowly, "you would none of you believe me!"

"Then you admit," put in the Professor, "that hitherto you have *not* been telling the truth?"

"Not as invariably as I could have wished," Horace confessed.

"So I suspected. Then, unless you can bring yourself to be perfectly candid, you can hardly wonder at our asking you to consider your engagement as broken off?"

"Broken off!" echoed Horace. "Sylvia, you won't give me up! You *know* I wouldn't do anything unworthy of you!"

"I'm certain that you can't have done anything which would make me love you one bit the less if I knew it. So why not be quite open with us?"

"Because, darling," said Horace, "I'm in such a fix that it would only make matters worse."

"In that case," said the Professor, "and as it is already rather late, perhaps you will allow one of your numerous retinue to call a four-wheeler?"

Horace clapped his hands, but no one answered the summons, and he could not find any of the slaves in the antechamber.

"I'm afraid all the servants have left," he explained; and it is to be feared he would have added that they were all obliged to return to the contractor by eleven, only he caught the Professor's eye and decided that he had better refrain. "If you will wait here, I'll go out and fetch a cab," he added.

"There is no occasion to trouble you," said the Professor; "my wife and daughter have already got their things on, and we will walk until we find a cab. Now, Mr. Ventimore, we will bid you good-night and good-bye. For, after what has happened, you will, I trust, have the good taste to discontinue your visits and make no attempt to see Sylvia again."

"Upon my honour," protested Horace, "I have done nothing to warrant you in shutting your doors against me!"

"I am unable to agree with you. I have never thoroughly approved of your engagement, because, as I told you at the time, I suspected you of recklessness in money matters. Even in accepting your invitation to-night I warned you, as you may remember, not to make the occasion an excuse for foolish extravagance. I come here, and find you in apartments furnished and decorated (as you informed us) by yourself, and on a scale which would be prodigal in a millionaire. You have a suite of retainers which

(except for their nationality and imperfect discipline) a prince might envy. You provide a banquet of—hem !—delicacies which must have cost you infinite trouble and unlimited expense—this, after I had expressly stipulated for a quiet family dinner ! Not content with that, you procure for our diversion Arab music and dancing of a—of a highly recondite character. I should be unworthy the name of father, sir, if I were to intrust my only daughter's happiness to a young man with so little common sense, so little self-restraint. And she will understand my motives and obey my wishes."

"You're right, Professor, according to your lights," admitted Horace. "And yet—confound it all !—you're utterly wrong, too ! "

"Oh, Horace," cried Sylvia ; "if you had only listened to dad, and not gone to all this foolish, foolish expense, we might have been so happy ! "

"But I have gone to no expense. All this hasn't cost me a penny ! "

"Ah, there *is* some mystery ! Horace, if you love me, you will explain—here, now, before it's too late ! "

"My darling," groaned Horace, "I would, like a shot, if I thought it would be of the least use ! "

"Hitherto," said the Professor, "you cannot be said to have been happy in your explanations—and I should advise you not to venture on any more. Good-night, once more. I only wish it were possible, without needless irony, to make the customary acknowledgments for a pleasant evening."

Mrs. Futvoye had already hurried her daughter away, and, though she had left her husband to express his sentiments unaided, she made it sufficiently clear that she entirely agreed with them.

"I WILL TELL YOU MY SECRET."

Horace stood in the outer hall by the fountain, in which his drowned chrysanthemums were still floating, and gazed in stupefied despair after his guests as they went down the path to the gate. He knew only too well that they would never cross his threshold, nor he theirs, again.

Suddenly he came to himself with a start. "I'll try it ! " he cried. "I can't and won't stand this ! " And he rushed after them bareheaded.

"Professor ! " he said, breathlessly, as he caught him up, "one moment. On second thoughts, I *will* tell you my secret, if you will promise me a patient hearing."

"The pavement is hardly the place for confidences," replied the Professor, "and, if it were, your costume is calculated to attract more remark than is desirable. My wife and daughter have gone on—if you will permit me, I will overtake them—I shall be at home to-morrow morning, should you wish to see me."

"No, to-night, to-night ! " urged Horace. "I can't sleep in that infernal place with this on my mind. Put Mrs. Futvoye and Sylvia into a cab, Professor, and come back. It's not late, and I won't keep you long — but for Heaven's sake, let me tell you my story at once."

Probably the Professor was not without some curiosity on the subject; at all events he yielded. "Very well," he said, "go into the house and I will rejoin you presently. Only remember," he added, "that I shall accept no statement without the fullest proof. Otherwise you will merely be wasting your time and mine."

"Proof ! " thought Horace, gloomily, as he returned to his Arabian halls. "The only decent

proof I could produce would be old Fakrash —and he's not likely to turn up again—especially now I want him."

A little later the Professor returned, having found a cab and dispatched his women-folk home. "Now, young man," he said, as he unwound his wrapper and seated himself on the divan by Horace's side, "I can give you just ten minutes to tell your story in, so let me beg you to make it as brief and as comprehensible as you can."

It was not exactly an encouraging invitation in the circumstances, but Horace took his courage in both hands and told him everything, just as it had happened.

"And that's your story?" said the Professor, after listening to the narrative with the utmost attention, when Horace came to the end.

"That's my story, sir," said Horace. "And I hope it has altered your opinion of me."

"It has," replied the Professor, in an altered tone; "it has indeed. Yours is a sad case—a very sad case."

"It's rather awkward, isn't it? But I don't mind so long as you understand. And you'll tell Sylvia—as much as you think proper?"

"Yes—yes; I must tell Sylvia."

"And I may go on seeing her as usual?"

"Well—will you be guided by my advice—the advice of one who has lived more than double your years?"

"Certainly," said Horace.

"Then, if I were you, I should go away at once, for a complete change of air and scene."

"That's impossible, sir—you forget my work!"

"Never mind your work, my boy: leave it for a while, try a sea-voyage, go round the world, get quite away from these associations."

"But I might come across the Jinnee again," objected Horace; "*he's* travelling, as I told you."

"Yes, yes, to be sure. Still, I should go away. Consult any doctor, and he'll tell you the same thing."

"Consult any—good God!" cried Horace; "I see what it is—you think I'm mad!"

"No, no, my dear boy," said the Professor, soothingly, "not mad—nothing of the sort; perhaps your mental equilibrium is just a trifle—it's quite intelligible. You see, the sudden turn in your professional prospects, coupled with your engagement to Sylvia—I've known stronger minds than yours thrown off their balance—temporarily, of course, quite temporarily—by less than that."

"You believe I am suffering from delusions?"

"I don't say that. I think you may see ordinary things in a distorted light."

"Anyhow, you don't believe there really was a Jinnee inside that bottle?"

"Remember, you yourself assured me at the time you opened it that you found nothing whatever inside it. Isn't it more credible that you were right then than that you should be right now?"

"Well," said Horace, "you saw all those black slaves; you ate, or tried to eat, that unutterably beastly banquet; you heard that music—and then there was the dancing-girl. And this hall we're in, this robe I've got on—are *they* delusions? Because if they are, I'm afraid you will have to admit that *you're* mad too."

"Ingeniously put," said the Professor. "I fear it is unwise to argue with you. Still, I will venture to assert that a strong imagination like yours, overheated and saturated with Oriental ideas—to which I fear I may have contributed—is not incapable of unconsciously assisting in its own deception. In other words, I think that you may have provided all this yourself from various quarters without any clear recollection of the fact."

"That's very scientific and satisfactory as far as it goes, my dear Professor," said Horace; "but there's one piece of evidence which may upset your theory—and that's this brass bottle."

"If your reasoning powers were in their normal condition," said the Professor, compassionately, "you would see that the mere production of an empty bottle can be no proof of what it contained—or, for that matter, that it ever contained anything at all."

"Oh, I see *that*," said Horace; "but *this* bottle has a stopper with what you yourself admit to be an inscription of some sort. Suppose that inscription confirms my story—what then? All I ask you to do is to make it out for yourself before you decide that I'm either a liar or a lunatic."

"I warn you," said the Professor, "that if you are trusting to my being unable to decipher the inscription you are deceiving yourself. You represent that this bottle belongs to the period of Solomon—that is, about a thousand years B.C. Probably you are not aware that the earliest specimens of Oriental metal-work in existence are not older

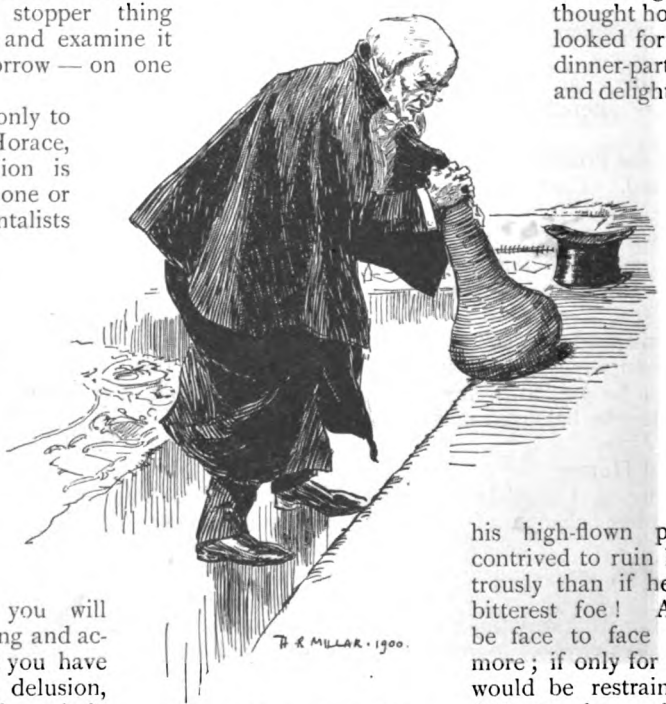
than the tenth century of our era. But, granting that it is as old as you allege, I shall certainly be able to read any inscription there may be on it. I have made out clay tablets in Cuneiform which were certainly written a thousand years before Solomon's time."

"So much the better," said Horace. "I'm as certain as I can be that, whatever is written on that lid—whether it's Phœnician, or Cuneiform, or anything else—must have some reference to a Jinnee confined in the bottle, or at least bear the seal of Solomon. But there the thing is—examine it for yourself."

"Not now," said the Professor; "it's too late, and the light here is not strong enough. But I tell you what I will do. I'll take this stopper thing home with me, and examine it carefully to-morrow — on one condition."

"You have only to name it," said Horace,

"My condition is that, if I, and one or two other Orientalists to whom I may submit it, agree with me that there is no real inscription at all — or, if any, that a date and meaning must be assigned to it totally inconsistent with your story — you will accept our finding and acknowledge that you have been under a delusion, and dismiss the whole affair from your mind."



"HE REMOVED THE METAL CAP."

"Oh, I don't mind agreeing to *that*," said Horace, "particularly as it's my only chance."

"Very well, then," said the Professor, as he removed the metal cap and put it in his pocket; "you may depend upon hearing from me in a day or two. Meantime, my boy," he continued, almost affectionately, "why not try a short bicycle tour somewhere, hey? You're a cyclist, I know—anything but allow yourself to dwell on Oriental subjects."

"It's not so easy to avoid dwelling on them as you think!" said Horace, with rather a dreary laugh. "And I fancy, Professor, that —whether you like it or not—you'll have to believe in that Jinnee of mine sooner or later."

"I can scarcely conceive," replied the Professor, who was by this time at the outer door, "any degree of evidence which could succeed in convincing me that your brass bottle had ever contained an Arabian Jinnee. However, I shall endeavour to preserve an open mind on the subject. Good evening to you."

As soon as he was alone, Horace paced up and down his deserted halls in a state of simmering rage as he thought how eagerly he had looked forward to his little dinner-party; how intimate and delightful it might have been, and what a monstrous and prolonged nightmare it had actually proved.

He owed all this to Fakrash. Yes, that incorrigibly grateful Jinnee, with his antiquated notions and his high-flown professions, had contrived to ruin him more disastrously than if he had been his bitterest foe! Ah! if he could be face to face with him once more; if only for five minutes, he would be restrained by no false delicacy: he would tell him fairly and plainly what a meddling, blundering old fool he was. But Fakrash had taken his flight for ever: there were no means of calling him back—nothing to be done now but go to bed and sleep—if he could!

Exasperated by the sense of his utter helplessness, Ventimore went to the arch which led to his bedchamber and drew the curtain back with a furious pull. And just within the archway, standing erect with folded arms and the smile of fatuous benignity which Ventimore was beginning to know and dread, was the form of Fakrash-el-Aamash, the Jinnee!

(To be continued.)

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

LVII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

DULNESS AT WESTMINSTER.

PRESIDING during the recess at a lecture delivered at Epsom on "The Parliaments of the Queen," Lord Rosebery offered some remarks which were widely discussed. The lecturer commented on the frequent assumption that, with the lowering of the franchise, the admission of working men members, and the consequent leavening of the aristocratic mass, the standard of the House of Commons in the matter of conduct must needs be lowered. He advanced the opinion that the present House of Commons is the best mannered he, with more than a quarter of a century's experience, had known. "In that respect," he added, "it even runs the risk of being described as dull."

PRESIDING AT A LECTURE.

Lord Rosebery, assenting to this view, advanced three reasons in explanation of the phenomenon. The first and most original was that the growing concern taken by the public in the work of County Councils has dulled the keen edge of interest formerly attached to Parliamentary proceedings. A second reason he found in the overpowering majority that exists in the present House of Commons. Thirdly, he noted the withdrawal from the scene of Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Gladstone, and, he might have added, of Mr. John Bright.

The first reason, obviously suggested by Lord Rosebery's patriotic and beneficent personal share in the work of County and District Councils, will not appeal to others with equal force. It falls before a simple test. Do the public in any county or district crowd the auditorium of the council chamber as the Strangers' Galleries of the House of Commons are thronged even on the dullest night? Do the newspapers, whose managers presumably know what the public want, report at any length, or report at all, the proceedings at meetings of the average County Council?

The answer is in the negative. County Councils doubtless have created a special interest of their own within local areas. But these do not interfere with the wider range of profounder attention, not only in this country but through continents peopled by the English-speaking race, which even the dull Parliament of the present epoch commands.

THE WET BLANKET OF THE MAJORITY.

Lord Rosebery goes nearer to the root of the matter when he cites the overpowering majority at the command of Ministers as a reason for prevailing dulness. A majority which after a slow course of defeats at by-elections still may be counted at 130 leaves no margin for either expectation or surprise. If it happened to be ranged under the Liberal instead of the Conservative flag the case would be different. Mr. Gladstone came into power in 1880 with a majority not much less overpowering than that which acclaimed Lord Salisbury in 1895. Ere the preliminary formality of swearing-in members had been completed the process of disintegration germinated in the Ministerial camp. Before the Session was far advanced Mr. Gladstone several times found himself in a minority, pathetically surrendering the Leadership of the House to Sir Stafford Northcote when motions relating to Mr. Bradlaugh were submitted.

That was the result of instinct and training. Before and since, Mr. Gladstone suffered melancholy experience of their joint influence. In the Conservative breast, instinct and training work in directly opposite directions. With a majority of 130 there is sore temptation for an able, ambitious man to achieve a reputation for honest independence by occasionally going into the lobby against his leaders. Steps in that direction were, early in the history of the present Parliament, taken by Mr. Bartley, whose cup of bitterness at

seeing Mr. Hanbury on the Treasury Bench, himself overlooked, was filled by the withholding of a card of invitation for a State concert—or was it a State ball? Mr. Gedge is not sound on the question of the Lord Chancellor. More than once he has revolted against Mr. Arthur Balfour's connivance with that eminent person's alleged misdoing in the matter of judicial patronage. As for Mr. Tommy Bowles, he is one of the acutest and most unsparing critics of the Government whether in individual capacity, as vendors of private property at good prices to the State, or as a Cabinet dealing with public affairs at home and abroad.

The revolt of the Pigtail party at the opening of the Session of 1898 seemed really threatening. If it had been Mr. Gladstone who had let Talienwan slip through his fingers

MR. YERBURGH. MR. MACDONA. LORD CHARLES BERESFORD.

THE PIGTAIL PARTY.

into the grasp of Russia, and if Mr. Yerburgh had, with equal force and authority, voiced the sentiments of a section of the Liberal party, even a majority of 130 would not have saved the Premier from a damaging blow. As it was, the storm blew over. Lord Salisbury went his own way, Russia got hers, and when the Opposition, perceiving an opportunity for doing a little business, took a division on a resolution challenging Lord Salisbury's policy in the Far East, lo! Mr. Yerburgh and his merry men "were not"—at least, they were not in the Opposition Lobby.

This condition of things, the knowledge that there is no hope in any circumstances of varying it, acts like a wet blanket on the smouldering fires of the House of Commons. It is, I think, the main reason for the state of things Lord Rosebery recognised at Westminster.

GRIEVOUS GAPS.

A powerful contributory is the great gap created by the disappearance from the lists of Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Bright can scarcely be said to be known to the present generation of the House of Commons. His mark upon its record was cut bold and deep, before his retirement from office in 1870 on the breakdown of his health. Nevertheless, even his silent presence on the Front Bench did much to ennoble the scene.

It is impossible to overrate the declension of interest in the proceedings of the House of Commons consequent on the withdrawal first of Mr. Disraeli, then, long after, of Mr. Gladstone. It was not only because of their commanding position. They were always on view, as much a part and parcel of the proceedings as the Mace on the Table or the Speaker in the Chair. Both, brought up in an old Parliamentary school whose traditions are now disregarded, observed the injunction that a Leader of the House, whether in office or Opposition, should sit out a debate, however immaterial its issue or inconsiderable the class of speakers carrying it on. The influence of this personal habit was widely marked. Colleagues on either Front Bench were ashamed to spend the evening in their room or on the Terrace when the chief was patiently keeping watch and ward. Above and below the gangway on either side the example had its influence. However dreary might be the current debate, there was Disraeli to watch, with his right leg crossed over his knee, his arms folded, his head bent, his eyes, bright to the last, closely watching the benches before him, especially that on which Mr. Gladstone sat.

Since he went away there was Mr.

Gladstone, a much more animated object. The essential difference between the two statesmen was nowhere more strongly marked than in their bearing in the House of Commons. For hours Disraeli sat motionless as the Sphinx. The only colleague he habitually conversed with on the Treasury Bench was a Junior Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Barrington, whose agreeable duties in the way of conversation were rewarded by an English peerage. Mr. Gladstone, bubbling over with vitality, talked to whomsoever might chance to sit on his right hand or his left, often emphasizing conversation with quick gesture of nervous hands.

Whether silent or conversing, these two were the cynosure of all eyes. Their presence denoted possibility of their at any moment interposing and lifting drear debate to the level of their own stature. There are in the present Parliament no two men—there is not any one man—who possesses this personal fascination. It necessarily follows that, field nights apart, the House of Commons is from hour to hour through its nightly sittings less interesting than it was when both or one of these historic figures was still above the horizon.

SURVIVORS OF THE QUEEN'S FIRST PARLIAMENT.

How many members of the House of Commons elected in the first year of the Queen's reign survive to-day? Having occasion in the Diamond Jubilee year to look the matter up, I found there were at that date six.

Of the half-dozen one was Mr. Leader, who represented Westminster in the first Parliament of the Queen, and distinguished himself by being one of the minority of twenty who supported that once well-known, now forgotten, statesman, Mr. Coroner Wakley, in an amendment to the Address. The Ministry, avowedly Liberal, had omitted from the Queen's Speech promise to undertake Parliamentary reform. The Coroner with professional energy forthwith proceeded to sit upon the Government. He found only eighteen members to follow the lead of himself and co-teller in what might be construed as a rudeness to the young Queen whose first Speech was nominally the subject of debate.

"WHAT! AREN'T YOU DEAD YET?"

Other of the six relics of this House of more than sixty years ago were Mr. Hurst, in 1837 member for Horsham; Mr. Wentworth-Fitzwilliam, member for Malton, now Earl Fitzwilliam; Sir Thomas Acland, member for West Somerset, whose family name was up to a recent date honourably represented in the House of Commons by the ex-Vice-President of the Council; Mr. Villiers, in 1897 as he was in 1837 member for Wolverhampton; and Mr. Gladstone, at the Jubilee period in busy seclusion at Hawarden, in 1837 member for Newark, hearing his days before him and the tumult of his life.

Three of these veterans—Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Villiers, and Sir Thomas Acland—have since gone over to the majority, and I fancy I have seen record of the passing away of one other.

NOVEMBER AND FEBRUARY: ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

A passage from "Behind the Speaker's Chair" appearing in the February Number has brought me a host of surprised inquiries. The following will serve as sample:—

"I have often read with interest your articles 'From Behind the Speaker's Chair,' and beg to call your attention to the following passage in the current number of THE STRAND: 'Early in the present Session Lord Salisbury in one House and Mr. Arthur Balfour in the other will be able to announce a peace not only with honour, but with substantial profit.' As this deliverance is made with a certain air of authority, I assume that you have information as to the prospects of peace which the public have not. Or is it that you are expressing the hopes and wishes of the Government rather than their confident anticipations? I know that it is the opinion of many that the campaign in South Africa will be more prolonged than your forecast indicates."

I daresay. But my unknown friend has the advantage of writing on the 5th of February, 1900, whereas my article was written in the last week of November, 1899.

I trust the Editor will not think I am wantonly disclosing the secrets of the prison-house if I mention that, owing to the phenomenal circulation of the Magazine, and the consequent prolonged work of printing, necessity is imposed upon contributors of sending in their manuscript at least two months in advance of the date of publication.

I allude to the matter less in explanation of a pronouncement that has proved so puzzling, than because the incident forcibly illustrates a historical position. So much happened between the end of November and the beginning of February that it had become difficult for the public to recur to their earlier frame of mind in view of the war in South Africa. In the February Number of THE STRAND it was, by accident, brought to light again, a sort of mummy dug out of a chance catacomb. When in April next these lines are printed, the whole aspect of affairs may be again changed. Meanwhile it is interesting to note how the British public, talked to in February in the mood in which it complacently dwelt in November, starts with surprise, and asks whether its interlocutor is poking fun, is mad, or merely grossly ignorant.

HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF.

At a time when the Government of the day lie under grave charges of mismanagement of a campaign, it is interesting to come upon some criticism of Lord Wolseley dealing with an analogous state of things. Some years ago there was issued a book, written by Colonel Campbell, entitled "Letters from Camp during the Siege of Sebastopol." Lord Wolseley wrote a preface in which, commenting on the sufferings of the troops in the Crimea, he declared that they "had their origin in the folly, criminal ignorance, parsimony, and inaptitude of the gentlemen who were Her Majesty's Ministers."

HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF.
From "Punch," August, 1856, after the Crimean War.

According to some authorities, it requires only to write the verb in the present tense in order to describe the earliest relations of Her Majesty's Ministers with the campaign in South Africa.

In a passage that has even fuller possibility of significance, the principal military adviser of Lord Salisbury's Government, alluding to "the crass ignorance of the Cabinet," protests it was "equalled only by the baseness with which it afterwards endeavoured to shift the blame from its own shoulders upon those of Sir R. Airey and other military authorities."

THREAT OF FULL DISCLOSURE.

Lord Edward Pelham-Clinton, Master of the Queen's Household, bitterly resents this passage as a direct indictment of his father, the late Duke of Newcastle, whom history holds to be the Minister chiefly responsible for the conduct of the Crimean War. That is but a filial reflex of the frame of mind with which the Duke himself met charges and insinuations levelled against him. It is something more than a tradition in the Pelham-Clinton family that the Duke of Newcastle was deliberately made the scapegoat of the Cabinet. Whilst the storm raged he wrote a letter to Hayward, in which the following ominous passage occurs: "I do not know whether justice will be done me, but if not, I shall publish everything and spare nobody."

I believe the Duke's memoirs, upon which the labour of years has been bestowed, are in a forward state. This threat on the part of the aggravated Duke promises that they will cast a new, perhaps an amazing, light on the inner history of Ministerial direction for the Crimean War and the responsibility for its criminal blunders.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL'S MEMOIRS.

There is another memoir of a much greater statesman the world would welcome. I am not thinking of the life of Disraeli, on the boxes containing the abundant materials for which Lord Rowton still sits contemplative. That is a pleasure past praying for, at least so far as the present generation are concerned. I allude to the life of Lord Randolph Churchill. That he contemplated its being undertaken appears on unquestioned authority. He made his will in the summer of 1883. No reference to the subject appears in the body of the document. Five years later, on the 22nd of September, 1888, he added a codicil whereby he bequeathed all his private papers, letters, and documents to his brother-in-law Viscount Curzon and his old friend Louis Jennings, M.P., "in trust to publish, retain all or any of them, as they in their absolute discretion may think proper."

When the will was opened poor Louis Jennings, whose open rupture with his much-loved friend and leader was one of the most dramatic incidents ever witnessed in the House of Commons, lay in his grave. Had he survived his chief, there is little doubt the book would have been written. Lord Curzon's many gifts do not tend in the direction of literary effort. But there is obviously a substitute at hand. As a rule biographies written by sons or daughters are a failure. The nearness of the point of vision makes impossible the effect of perspective. Sir George Trevelyan's "Life of Lord Macaulay" appears to suggest that the standpoint of a nephew is the nearest at which biographical faculty may be successfully undertaken. But Mr. Winston Churchill has on more than one occasion testified to possession of the gift of self-detachment which, as enabling one dispassionately to adjudge intimate friends or near relations, was a prominent endowment of his distinguished father.

BLACK ROD.

A skilful record of the career of Lord Randolph Churchill, a selection from his correspondence, and a study of his brilliant wayward personality would make a peerless book. To produce it is a duty the son owes to the memory of his father.

DOMESTIC DIFFERENCES IN HIGH QUARTERS.

Black Rod and the Serjeant-at-Arms in the House of Lords this Session tread the floor of the historic chamber with secret consciousness that they have achieved a great victory over that enemy of Ministerial mankind, the Treasury. Thirteen years ago an Act of Parliament was passed requiring that all Government officials should contribute 10 per cent. of their salary towards a superannuation fund. Up to a recent period the staff of both Houses of Parliament escaped this impost. The Treasury, beginning to feel the burden imposed upon them by the generosity of a Government who have devoted millions to the subvention of Church schools, the relief of the clergy, and the amelioration of the lot of rate-paying landlords, felt they must do something to raise the wind. A little more than a year ago a vacancy arose in the office of Serjeant-at-Arms in attendance on the Lord Chancellor at the House of Lords. Here was a chance of readjusting the balance.

Scarcely was General Sir Arthur Ellis installed in his new office than he received intimation from the Treasury that his salary would be docked to the amount of 10 per cent. There happened to be sitting a Select Committee to consider the whole question of the officers of the House of Lords, whom jealous commoners had criticised as being in number far beyond the needs of the institution, and, therefore, entailing unnecessary expense. To this Committee General Ellis carried the Treasury communication. The Committee wrote to the Treasury promising to take the matter into consideration. That was in December, 1898, and there, in accordance with precedence, it seemed probable the matter would rest. The Committee would go on indefinitely "considering" the matter, and in the meanwhile the Serjeant-at-Arms would continue to draw his full salary.

Therein the Committee counted too confidently on human frailty, a weakness from which the Treasury is free. In June last My Lords woke up to recollection that no answer on the point had been forthcoming from the Select Committee. A note was accordingly written, referring to the correspondence in December, and stating that "My Lords would be glad to be favoured with the views of the Committee on the question." The Clerk of Parliaments replied that the office of Serjeant-at-Arms is a Royal Household appointment, and that no deduction is ever made from the salaries of such officers. By way of clincher it was added that Black Rod, also a Household appointment, had never had such claim made upon him. The Clerk of Parliaments was so delighted with this illustration of his case that he airily remarked: "It therefore seems hardly necessary to bring the matter before the House of Lords' Officers Committee."

A DANIEL COME TO JUDGMENT.

As on an historic occasion Lord Randolph Churchill "forgot Goschen," so, in this delightful domestic comedy, the Clerk of Parliaments "forgot Hanbury." Hitherto the correspondence on behalf of the Treasury was conducted by Lord Salisbury's friend, the Permanent Secretary, Sir Francis Mowatt. Now a greater than he stepped to the front. A burlier figure filled the breach. Mr.

Hanbury himself took the business in hand, and dealt a blow which (of course, in a Parliamentary sense) doubled up the Clerk of Parliaments. The Serjeant-at-Arms, he pointed out, draws his salary from the House of Lords' Vote in the capacity of an officer serving in that House, and not as a Household officer paid from the Civil List. *Argal*, he must stump up a tithe of his salary.

That was very well as meeting the argument about the Serjeant-at-Arms. It was the next move that revealed the dangerous proclivities of Mr. Hanbury, trained, in company with Mr. "Tommy" Bowles and Mr. Christopher Trout, in the close conflict of Committee of Supply. "You point out," he blandly added, "that no such abatement has ever been made in the case of successive holders of the office of Black Rod, which is equally a Household appointment. But here, too, the emoluments are drawn not from the Civil List but from the House of Lords' Vote, and now that their attention has been drawn to the matter, My Lords cannot avoid the same conclusion as that reached with regard to the Serjeant-at-Arms."

MR. HANBURY TAKES THE BUSINESS IN HAND.

Here was a nice pickle! Not only was the Treasury implacable in the matter of 10 per cent. on the salary of the Serjeant-at-Arms, but was now full cry in pursuit of similar plunder from Black Rod. What that august functionary said when he heard of the Clerk of Parliaments' ingenious arguments on behalf of the Serjeant-at-Arms is happily withheld from public consideration.

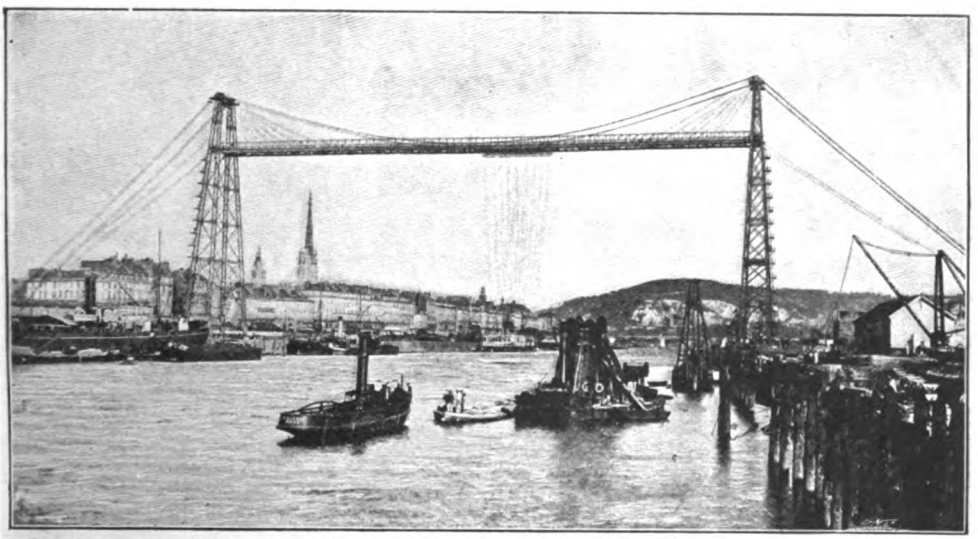
As for the Clerk of Parliaments, he meekly replied that he would lay both cases before the Select Committee, as requested by Mr. Hanbury. Fortunately for Black Rod and the Serjeant-at-Arms, the Select Committee, being a corporate body, did not suffer from the personal apprehension that naturally took possession of the individual when the Clerk of Parliaments was temporarily deprived of breath in the circumstance described. You cannot frame an indictment against a whole nation, neither can a Financial Secretary to the Treasury, albeit 6in. 6in. in height, grind the faces of a whole Select Committee. The Lords' Committee accordingly, safely locked in their room, signed a sort of round-robin oracularly declaring that "as the Treasury Rules derive their validity from the Superannuation Act, which does not apply to the staff of either House of Parliament, the alleged statutory obligation to make the proposed reduction does not really exist."

Thus was a rapacious Treasury defeated, and thus it comes to pass that from this Session onward Black Rod and Serjeant-at-Arms will draw their full salary, none daring to make them afraid of a 10 per cent. reduction.

PURSUED BY THE TREASURY.

The Queerest Bridges in the World.

By Herbert C. Fyfe.



From a] GENERAL VIEW OF THE FERRY BRIDGE AT ROUEN. *[Photograph.*

THE engineer who is called upon to construct a bridge over a river has to take into consideration, before he decides on its ultimate form, the question as to whether or not there is much shipping in the waterway. If tall ships are in the habit of passing up and down stream it follows, as a natural consequence, that the bridge must be so built as to allow the vessels which use the river to come and go without hindrance.

The usual plan in such cases is to adopt one of the forms of "movable bridges." These may be divided into (1) Bascules, or drawbridges; (2) swing bridges; (3) traversing bridges; (4) lift bridges; (5) pontoon bridges.

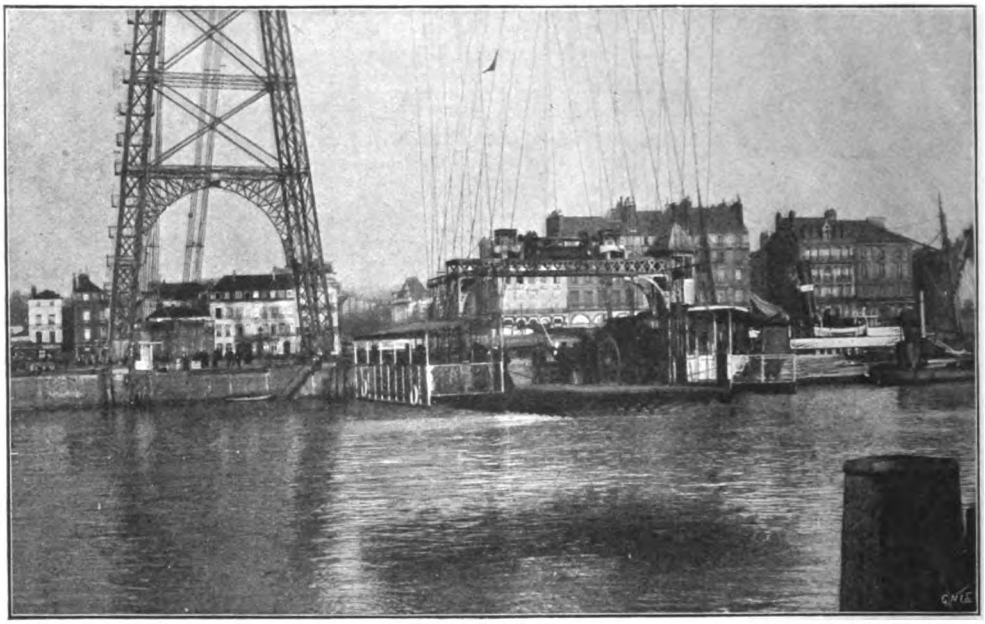
In the present article it is not intended to enter into a discussion on the conditions under which these bridges should be employed, nor yet to describe severally their form and design, but simply to show how the problem, just enumerated, has been solved by the erection quite recently at Rouen of a bridge which does not come under either of these five heads.

The title that has been chosen for this article, "The Queerest Bridges in the World," will not be considered an ill-chosen one when the photographs, here reproduced, are studied. Nowhere in Great Britain or America do there exist ferry bridges such as these about to be described, and, therefore, the subject should be one of especial interest both to the engineering world and the general public.

Every Britisher has heard of the Tower Bridge, and is proud of this fine structure. The manner in which the bascules are raised and lowered is too well known to need description, but it may be mentioned that a "ferry bridge" would be of little use here owing to the large amount of traffic from the Middlesex to the Surrey shores. Where the traffic is not nearly so great it is probable that, given certain conditions, the ferry bridge is the cheapest and most efficient attainable.

In the case of the town of Rouen the problem to be solved was the conveyance of traffic and foot-passengers from one side of the river to the other, without interfering with the passage of ships. Inland towns, such as Bordeaux, Nantes, Caen, and Rouen, are considered as maritime ports; the last-mentioned has developed very considerably in recent years, and now carries on a large trade by means of the waterway. Factories and docks have been built, and the tonnage of the port, which, not long ago, was but 900,000 tons, has now attained to 2,000,000 tons.

Many schemes had been proposed for the crossing of the river below the Boië l'Dieu Bridge. Most engineers favoured a swing

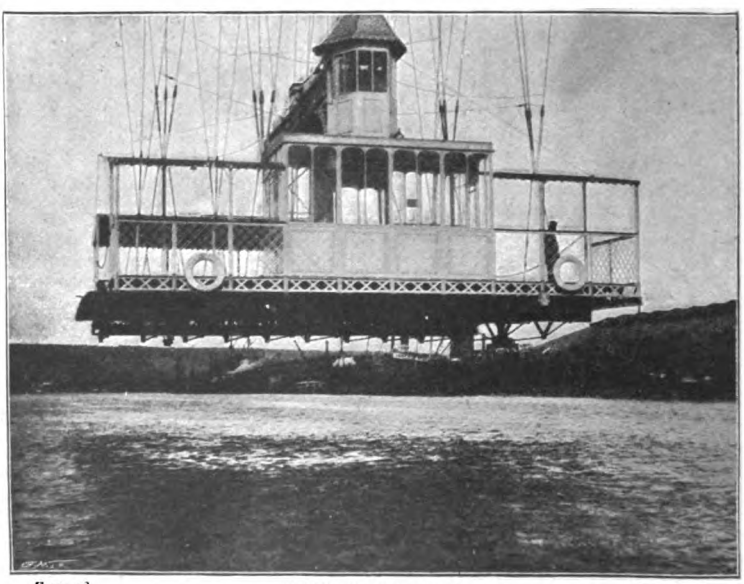


From a] THE CAR IN TRANSIT. *[Photograph.*

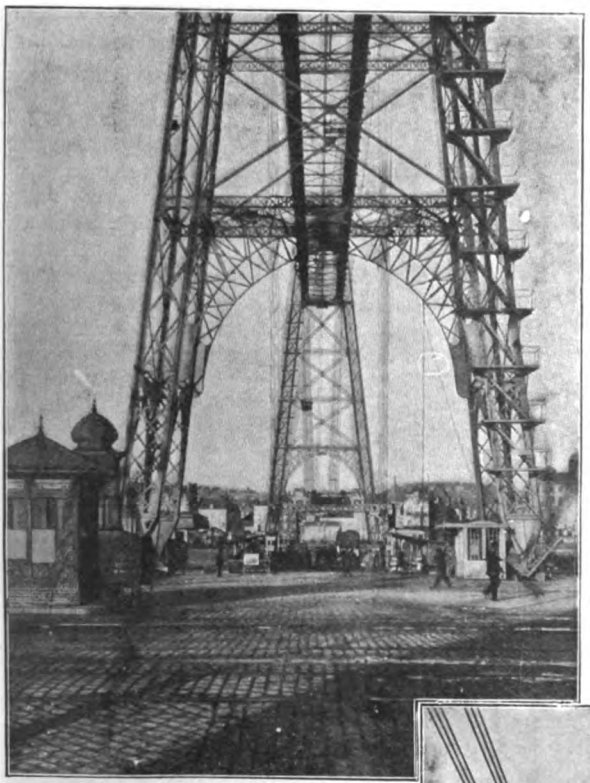
bridge, but the Chamber of Commerce decided against a bridge of this kind, for the reason that it caused no little delay to those who wished to cross the river; that it was expensive and cumbersome; and, finally, that if it met with any accident, it would entirely block the passage of shipping. Various forms of bridges, such as those which have been mentioned above, were considered, but the design which found most favour in the eyes of the authorities was the one which eventually was put into execution.

The photographs here reproduced will give the reader a good idea of the "ferry bridge." So far as we are aware, there exist but three of this class of bridge in the world. One is the new one at Rouen, over the River Seine; the second is over the River Nervion, in Spain, at the town of Portugaleté; while the third is at Bizerta, in Tunis. The last two examples had given such excellent results that the ferry bridge was finally adopted for the port of Rouen.

This is the first ferry bridge, or "Pont Transbordeur," as the French call it, which has been built in France, and it is already beginning to give great satisfaction. We understand a fourth ferry bridge is to be built over the Scheldt at Antwerp, and doubtless more examples of this kind of



From a] SIDE VIEW OF THE CAR. *[Photograph.*



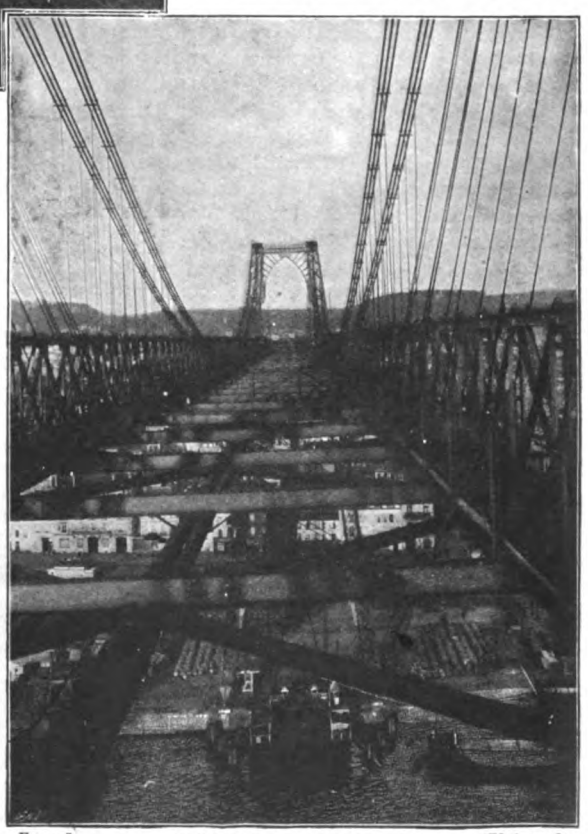
THE ENTRANCE TO THE ROUEN BRIDGE.
From a Photograph.

bridge will be constructed, as occasion requires. The engineer of the Rouen bridge is M. Arnodin, of Château Neuf-sur-Loire, who has made a speciality of this kind of work. The Rouen Chamber of Commerce voted 600,000f. for its construction.

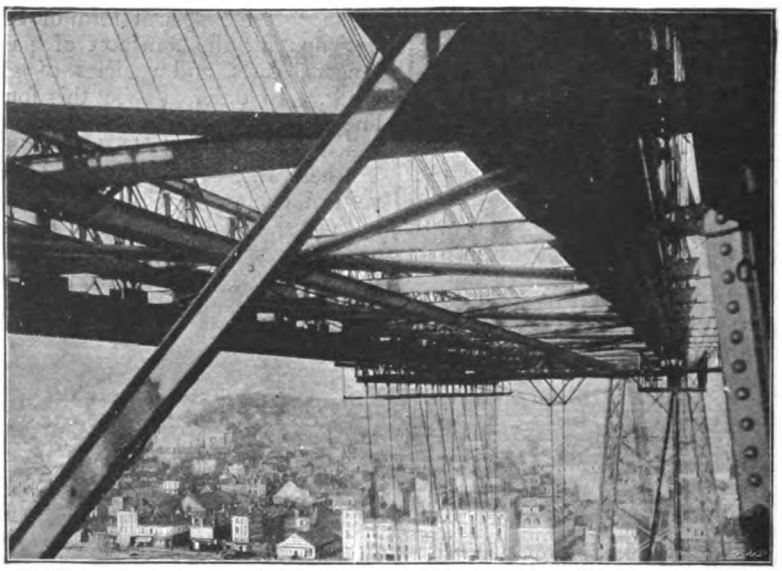
On each side of the River Seine, at a distance of 150 mètres below the Boië l'Dieu Bridge, two great skeleton towers, with steel framework, have been erected. Between these two supports, almost at the top of each, there has been hung a kind of suspension bridge, consisting of a horizontal platform held up by cables stretched from the tops of the pillars. In this kind of bridge it is necessary for the elevated platform to be sufficiently high to allow the tallest ships which use the river to pass easily underneath it.

In the Rouen "Transbordeur" the height is 51 mètres, and this has been found ample for the purpose. The platform is not intended for traffic of any kind: its function is to support the special form of car designed for the transport of passengers, carts, and vehicles of all kinds. In order to effect this four lines of rails are laid down, upon which run sixty small wheels in pairs. To these wheels are fixed thirty steel vertical cables, which are fastened to the car, which is situated at the exact height over the river of the roads on each side of the quay. In order that the tension produced by the weight of the platform and of the car may not be too great a strain on the two upright supports, these are braced by means of cables to massive pieces of masonry placed some little distance behind each tower.

The car is 11 mètres in length and 13 mètres broad; the central portion is meant for vehicles—it is 8 mètres broad, and can accommodate a number of carts, etc., horse-riders, and cyclists. On each side are spaces intended for foot-



From a] THE ROUEN BRIDGE FROM ABOVE. *[Photograph.*



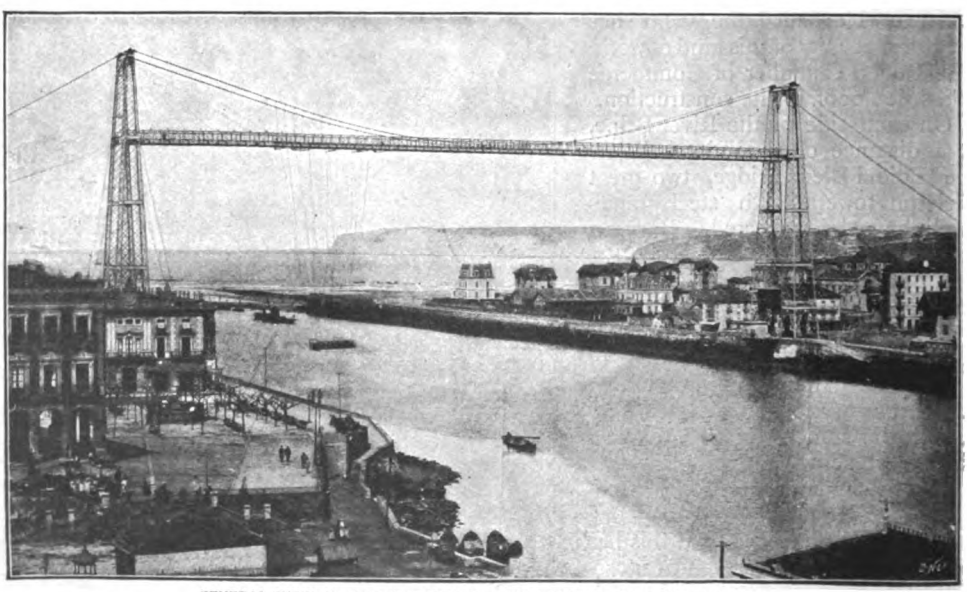
From a] THE ROUEN BRIDGE FROM BELOW. *[Photograph.*

passengers: the right-hand side is covered in and is reserved for first-class pedestrians; that on the left is protected by an awning, and is intended for the commoner folk. The car alone weighs 20 tons, and the rolling apparatus on the elevated platform has the same weight. When full to the maximum of vehicles and foot-passengers the car carries a burden of 65 tons—thus a total weight of 105 tons has to be transported from one side of the river to the other.

By way of special precaution, all the pieces in the supporting arrangement have been doubled, so that if one should from any reason break the car could still continue to run while it was being repaired. There seems to be no possibility of the wheels on the elevated platform running off the rails, and, indeed, there is very little chance of anything going wrong with the structure.

The works for the installation of the ferry bridge at Rouen were commenced in April, 1898, and have been completed now some weeks. The rapid way in which the work has been carried out is in some measure due to the electrical machinery which has been available.

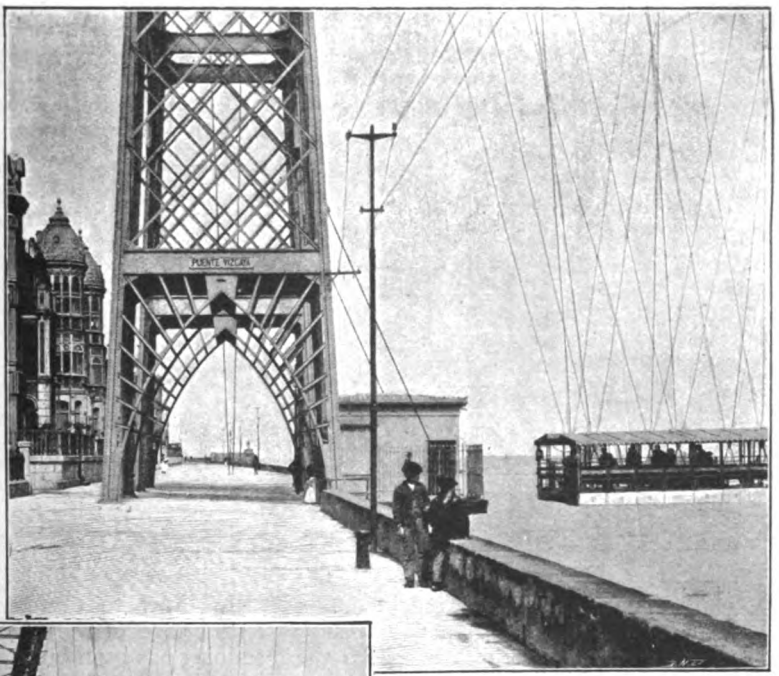
At Rouen electricity can be supplied in almost any quantity, and the cost of current is cheap. On both banks very powerful electric cranes were erected, and these served



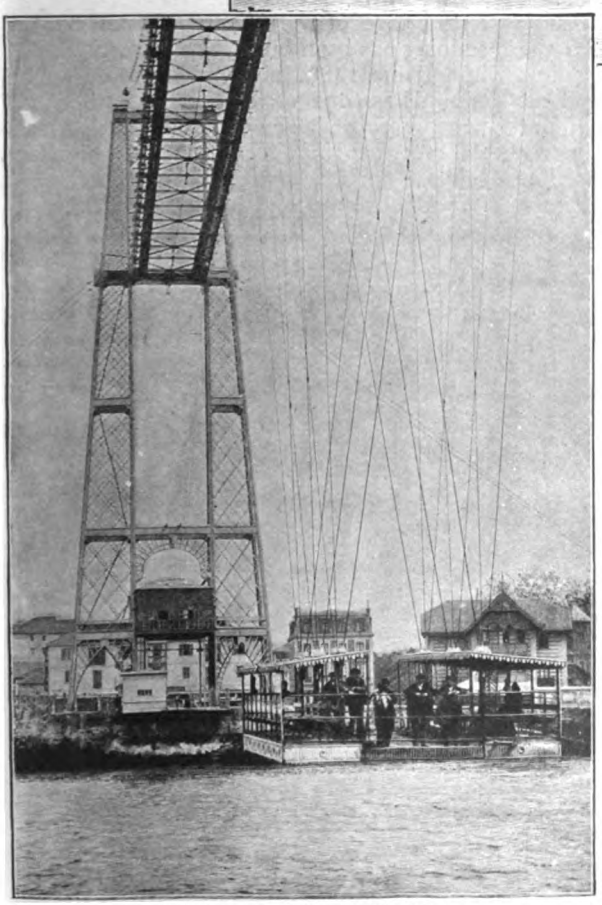
GENERAL VIEW OF THE PORTUGUESE FERRY BRIDGE OVER THE NERVION.
From a Photo. by Hauser & Menet, Madrid.

for the installation of the different parts required for the pillars. The car is moved across the river by electricity, and the "driver" is located in a little tower over the first-class compartment. The cost of transport is 5c. second class and 10c. first class; empty carriages 25c., and full ones 40c.

Over the River Nervion, between Portugaleté and Las Arenas, there was built in the year 1893, by Mr.



THE ENTRANCE TO THE BRIDGE OVER THE NERVION.
From a Photo. by Hauser & Menet, Madrid.

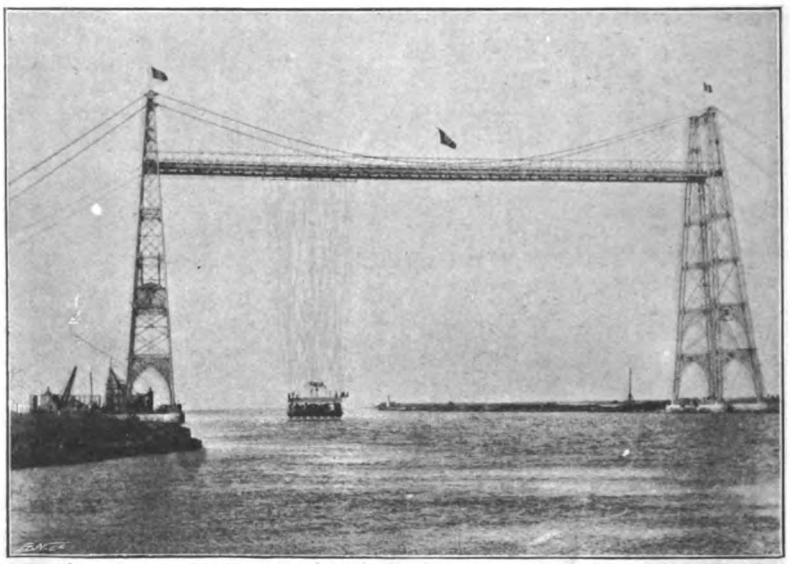


THE CAR CROSSING THE NERVION.
From a Photo. by Hauser & Menet, Madrid.

Palacio, of Bilbao, a "Puente Vizcaya," or "puente trasbordador," which resembles in character the Rouen Transbordeur. Two massive double piers, 240ft. in height, stand on stone platforms close to the edge of the river, and support a light iron bridge, 530ft. long and 150ft. above the water.

From the bridge hangs a car, to which the Spaniards have given the term "Flying Ferry." This runs some 160ft. above the water, being propelled by an engine in the lower part of the east pier. It can accommodate 200 persons, and makes the crossing of the river in one minute. The first-class fare is 10c.; the second, 5c. The car is suspended in much the same way as is the ferry of the Rouen bridge, and, as will be seen from the photographs, the stability of the upper bridge is increased by wire cables passing over the tops of the piers and embedded in the ground beyond. The cost of the "Puente Vizcaya" was 800,000f. (£32,000).

Our last example of the ferry bridge is the one at Bizerta, and

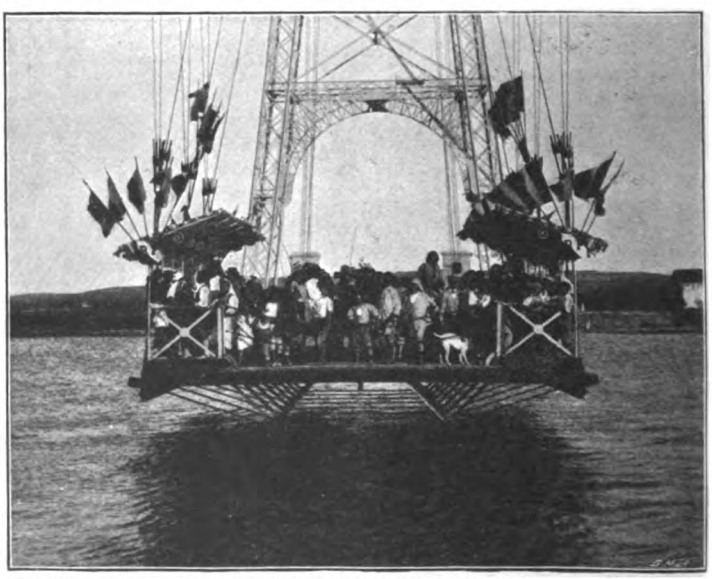


[From a] GENERAL VIEW OF THE FERRY BRIDGE AT BIZERTA. [Photograph.

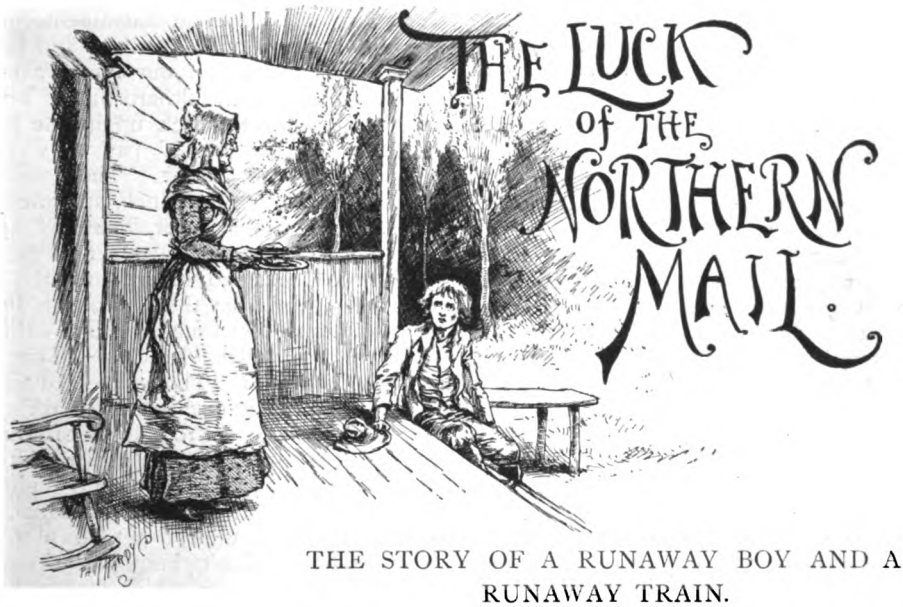
for particulars of this we are indebted to a recent number of the German periodical, *Fur Alle Welt.* On the coast of Algiers lies the very old town of Bizerta, the Hippo Zanitus of the Romans. For centuries it dragged out the miserable existence of a fishing harbour that was gradually filling up, and could never hope to attain importance of any kind. But since the year 1886 the strategical importance of this point has been better understood, and the French Government decided to appropriate a certain sum of money to be used chiefly for the construction of piers that would protect the harbour from being entirely filled with sand. The result of this first work was so very favourable that operations were begun in earnest with the view of making Bizerta a first-class harbour for war and commercial purposes.

To-day the outer harbour can accommodate the largest ocean steamers and war vessels; the outer harbour is connected with the inner harbour by a canal, which is 203ft. wide, and through which ships with a draught of 24ft. 7in. can pass. The inner harbour is a lake which has been dredged out. The change in the level of the sea at ebb and flood tide causes a current, which, although it does not interfere with the passage of ships, renders the crossing of the canal in boats a difficult and dangerous process.

In order to overcome this difficulty, a ferry bridge of the kind we have been describing has been built. This consists of an iron frame 148ft. high, which is formed of two pillars, one on each bank, and a connecting bridge. The car is suspended, as in the other two instances, from the high-level bridge, and is propelled backwards and forwards by an engine located on land.



[From a] THE CAR CROSSING THE CANAL AT BIZERTA. [Photograph.



THE STORY OF A RUNAWAY BOY AND A RUNAWAY TRAIN.

By Alvah Milton Kerr.

SOILED, sunburned, and grey with dust, he reluctantly entered the gate leading to a small house not far from the railway. Poplars stood about the humble structure, and back of it Oregon pines hung like a green cloud on the lifted forehead of a mountain. A grey-haired woman, bending over some sewing, sat in a rocking-chair upon the porch of the house. The dusty youth approached her timidly, his battered hat in hand. The woman started, looked up, and peered hard at him over her glasses. "We don't want any tramps 'round here," she said, in dry, severe tones.

The boy hesitated, twisting and rolling up his hat in embarrassment. "I'm not a tramp, missus. I'm a thief—that is, they charged me with stealin' money that I didn't steal, an'—an' I'm tryin' to get away," he stammered. "I ain't got a cent, an' I ain't had anything to eat since yisterday mornin'. I don't like to beg, but—but——"

"Mercy!" exclaimed the woman; "you do look weak an' awfully petered out. Come in here, and set down."

The youth approached, and sank down upon the porch steps.

"Come up an' set on a cheer," said the woman, "an' I'll get you somethin' t' eat."

The boy stirred restlessly. "No, thank yeh, I ain't—I ain't so very clean," he said; "I'd ruther set here."

The woman's face softened as she turned and entered the house. Presently she returned, bringing several dishes of food. "I'll just set 'em before you here on the steps," she said. "I reckon y'll enjoy things best that way."

"Oh, missus——" the boy began, a world of gratitude and eagerness in his voice, then suddenly fell to eating in wild, half-famished fashion. The woman, mercifully, did not look at him, but continued her sewing. When the wayfarer had finished she placed the empty dishes on a chair, and again seated herself. "Did you come through Borpee?" she inquired, a smile hovering about her mouth.

"The town 'bout two miles back there?"

"Yes, that's Borpee."

"Yes, I come through it. I didn't stop long," in a rueful tone.

The woman laughed. "I reckon you didn't," she said. "It's awful the way they treat—treat tramps up t' town. You see, the town board had a fuss with the railroad. They passed an ordinance that the railroad must stop all trains at Borpee, on account of the town havin' give 'em the right o' way. So the railroad men got up a scheme to make the town sick of its bargain by bringin' every tramp from the north that they can get hold of an' dumpin' 'em out in Borpee. Sometimes there's a hundred put off the train there at one time, folks say. The town folks try to make the tramps stay on the trains, and they have a great time."

"I understan' now," said the youth. "That's why the trainmen was good to me all the way from Portland an' then kicked me off at the town. I tried t' get back on, but one of 'em kicked me in the face, an' I had to let go."

"Is that how you got that bruised place on y'r cheek?"

"Yes," and his soiled fingers clenched involuntarily.

"It's mean as—as *dirt*," said the woman, hotly. "What might y'r name be?"

"Saul Banks. The boys back in Painter District used to call me Sorrel, 'cause my hair's red."

"'Taint so *very* red," said the woman, gently. "Where's Painter District?"

"Back in Wisconsin. It's a school district in the country. It's most all woods there." A wistful look came into his eyes.

"Y'r people live there?"

"Not many now—on'y a uncle."

"Where's y'r father an' mother live?"

"I ain't got any; they're dead."

"Long?"

"Since I was five or six year old. They was—was burned in a big forest fire, back there."

"In Wisconsin?"

"Yes. The woods got afire for miles an' miles an' miles 'round us. Mother an' pap hid me in a hole in the bank of a creek, an' I was saved; but they—they burned. Pap's brother tuck me to raise, but after a while he treated me so bad I couldn't stay, an' I run off. I guess I wasn't very good," and Sorrel rolled his twisted hat back and forth on his ragged knee and looked away.

"But you didn't steal?" queried the woman, looking at him over her glasses.

A flush came into the youth's freckled, dusty face. "No, on'y sometimes melons or apples t' eat, jus' for fun. Most boys do that, yeh know."

"Yes, but you was charged with stealin' somethin' else, you said."

Sorrel hesitated a moment. "Yes, that was money," he said. "I run off from Uncle Reuben's early this spring an' come West. I wanted to get to Aunt Lucy's—she's mother's sister, an' lives down at Sacramento, in California—an' so I got to St. Paul, and beat my way over the railroad out into Washington State. I had a awful hard time. I went t' work on a wheat ranch up in the Palouse country t' get money t' pay my way down the coast to Aunt Lucy's. There was a lot of men workin' on the ranch, an' one young feller named Sime Saucer, 'bout my age an' size. Him an' me run together all the time. 'Bout two weeks ago, Mr. Young, the ranch man, was goin' t' pay the men off, an' brought a lot of money out from the bank—three or four hundred dollars, I guess. That night somebody stole it. They suspected Sime an' me, an' Sime he lit out; but the sheriff nabbed me, an' tuck me over to a town on the railroad, an' jugged me. The gaol wasn't much account, though, and the second night I got out and made tracks for California. I've got this far. I want t' get down to Aunt Lucy's, but I don't know; I s'pose the sheriff'll be there watchin' for me." He ended with a note of hopelessness in his voice.

"Did the folks at the ranch know about y'r wantin' t' go to Sacramento?"

"Some did, an' mebbe some of the others did, too. I'm goin', anyhow. I've made up my mind." He rose stiffly to his feet. "I'm much obliged to you, missus; I was mighty hungry." He started toward the gate.

"Wait jus' a minute," said the woman, hastily rising and entering the house.

Sorrel stood fidgeting. After a little time the good soul returned, in her hand some bread and butter and pickles and meat, tied up in a clean handkerchief. "When the vittles are gone, you can have the handkerchief," she said, in kindly voice, "and here's a little money. It's all I got in the house jus' now, or I'd give you more. I hope they won't never find you."

Sorrel's lips began to quiver. "I don't want the money," he said, huskily. "I couldn't take that. But I'd like the vittles, for—for I was awful hungry."

She reached the money toward him. "You'd best take it; you'll need it," she said.

"No, I'm all right," he replied, and started hastily toward the gate. There he turned,

and awkwardly took off his hat. "I'm much obliged. I'll tell Aunt Lucy how—how good yeh was," he said.

"Good-bye; take keer of yourself," said the woman.

"Good-bye. I'll try to."

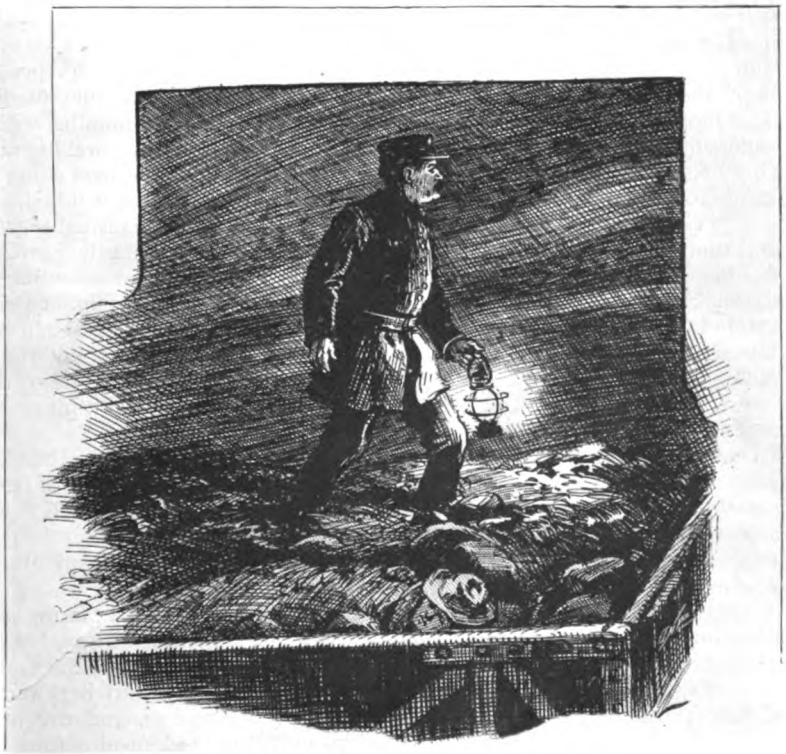
The woman turned toward the house wiping her eyes with the corner of her gingham apron, while Sorrel trudged southward along the track, a fugitive from the law, but happier than he had been for days.

Near sundown he came to a little box-like station in a narrow gulch, but there seemed to be no one in charge. "I reckon the trains don't stop here," he said, wearily, and after a moment's rest plodded onward. Twilight descended, purple and shadowy, and slowly merged into darkness. He sat down, and took some food from the handkerchief, and ate it; then stumbled onward again. Presently an enormous red moon rolled up over a mountain-top, and dropped its wan light into the ghostly cañons. "I must find a place where the trains stop," he kept saying to himself, and pushed onward. He crossed long trestles, hearing streams roaring far below; passed through cuts blasted from the rocks, and heard the cries of night birds and wild animals rise weirdly from the cloud of pines on the mountain-sides. He felt inexpressibly lonesome, save when at long intervals trains thundered by, filling the silent mountain gorges with a thousand clapping echoes, and leaving the solemn hush more deep and heavy than before.

At last he came to a strip of bench-land, a side-track, and long ricks of corded wood. "Here's where trains wood up," he said, with a sigh of satisfaction, and crept in behind a rick and laid down to wait. He was dead tired, and despite all his efforts to beat back the numbing tide of sleep, its soft waves flowed over and engulfed him. Presently he sat up with a thrill of fear and expectation: a train was drawing in on the siding. He cautiously drew himself up, and peered over the top of the rick. The train was a long one, a string of flat cars loaded with something that looked like a mixture of sand, gravel, and broken stone. At the forward end of the train panted a great 120-ton Mogul engine, with the moonlight glinting softly on her polished jacket; at the rear end was a stubby caboose, its red and green lights gleaming. Sorrel could dimly make out that the conductor was standing on the front steps of the caboose. The rear brakeman was going forward.

"Look out for hoboes, Jim," shouted the conductor. "If you see any of 'em trying to get on, you just paralyze 'em!"

Nevertheless, when Sorrel had noted the conductor's withdrawal into the caboose, and had listened a moment to the men plugging the wood into the engine tender, he crept round the end of the rick and up into one of



"A BRAKEMAN PASSED HIS ROUGH COUCH."

the flat cars. Sinking prone on his stomach, he hastily scraped back some of the earthy conglomerate from along one of the side-boards of the car, rolled into the depression, and covered himself up as best he could with the broken stuff. After a little time the Mogul roared "off brakes," the couplings clanked sharply, and the train jarred and rumbled away through the echoing defiles.

Sorrel, lying snugly and, save for his face, quite covered by the crushed and mealy matter, smiled and whispered, "I'm all right. This must be a train of low-grade ore goin' down t' the reduction works in California, or somewhere else"; in which apprehension Sorrel did not err: the train would ultimately have borne him to Sacramento, had not fate stored up a very great disaster for it and willed that Sorrel should enter into a new and broader career.

After a time Sorrel's busy thoughts fell quiet, and he slept. Twice a brakeman passed his rough couch, wading through the yielding mass of crushed volcanic rock toward the caboose, but without dreaming that a human being lay almost under his feet. Hours passed, and finally the tired fugitive awoke. The stars were fading from the sky, and a curling film of rose was creeping up the east. The boy lifted his head a little, and glanced around. They were still in the mountains; but while he slept the train had made its way out of one mountain district, had traversed the valley of the Rogue River, and was now climbing into the Klamath Range. On every hand rose the pine-covered shoulders and craggy elbows of the mountain-land, a heaped and tumbled chaos of steeps and far-reaching heights, touched with the filmy flush of dawn. Sorrel could not say whether they had entered California or were still in Oregon. He sighed, dropped his head back on its pillow of stone, and lapsed into a doze.

A train overcomes the resistance of a mountain much as a sailing-vessel overcomes a head wind on the sea. Both tack to right and left, and force the very thing that opposes them to aid them to the desired achievement. It was thus the great Mogul engine scaled the range, following the track wherever it twisted, to right and left, doubling back and curving forward again, plunging through cañons and tunnels, curving around jutting spurs, yet always steadily ascending toward the summit and the clouds.

When Sorrel awoke again he saw a world of mountain-tops below him, heaped and strangely beautiful in the yellow glory of the early morning. He partly turned his body, and, propping his chin in his hands, looked ahead. He could see the top of the cab and the smoke-stack of the Mogul swaying softly. Evidently they had passed over the summit, for the speed of the train was momentarily increasing. He wondered where they were. Had he known, and could he have foreseen what lay before them, he would not have slipped his hand into the handkerchief and cautiously drawn forth a piece of meat and munched it, as he did, thinking gratefully the while of its grey-haired giver. The meat tasted sweet in his mouth. "Wish I had a mother like her," he mumbled. "Wonder how Aunt Lucy looks! Hope she's good."

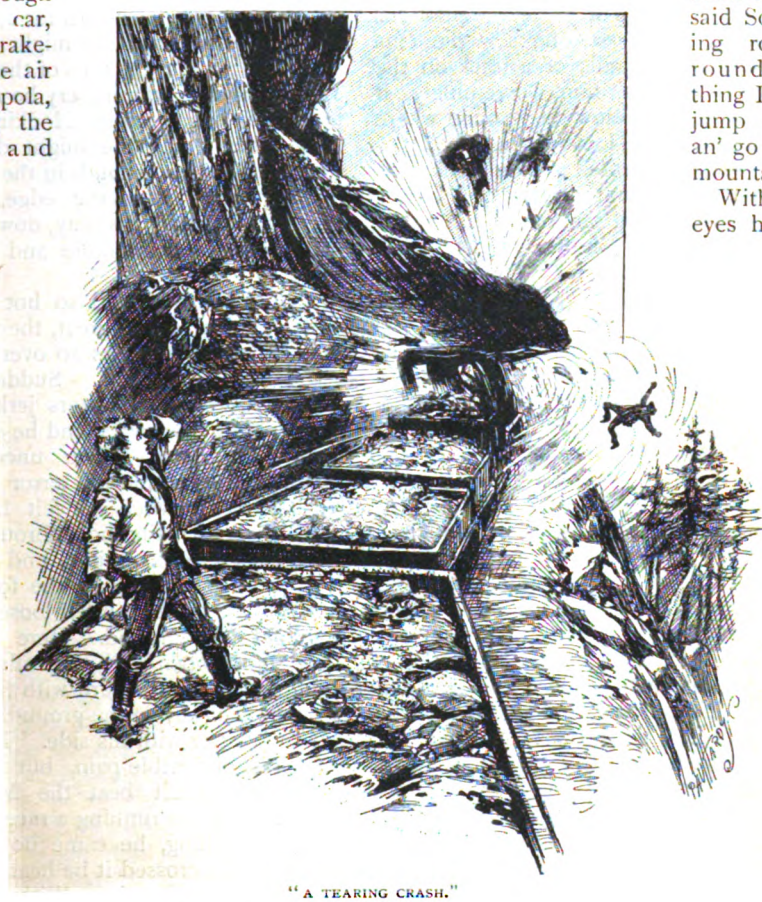
The downward inclination of the track was very pronounced. For thirty miles ahead of the train there was a continuous fall, a tremendous whip-lash of steel winding round the mountain sides, over streams, through tunnels, down cañons, through abysses, until it fell at last across the waters of the Klamath, and began to climb away to mount the base of snow-capped Shasta. Like some sort of jointed monster with mighty iron head, the long train went downward, roaring and swaying and undulating continuously like a racing snake, as it followed the never-ceasing curves. Sorrel munched at the meat contentedly. It was not half bad, this swimming without effort down the steeps of the swelling range.

Suddenly there came a pealing roar from the Mogul, a wild shout for brakes! The drawheads crashed together along the train, and involuntarily Sorrel jumped to his feet. The train was rounding a shattered shoulder of the mountain, a point where the footing for the track had been blasted from the rock. On the left, a splintered wall of stone swept upward; on the right, the ground fell downward, thick with pines and the strewed *débris* of the blasting.

Not fifty feet ahead of the engine Sorrel saw a huge wedge of stone protruding from the shattered wall; with the same look he saw the fireman leap out from the gangway of the Mogul and turn in the air as he went downward among the trees. The next instant, with a tearing crash, the smoke-stack, sand-chest, whistle, bell, and cab were swept from the top of the engine. Sorrell saw the engineer whirl backward in the flying wreck of the cab, and caught a glimpse of something red gushing from the man's mouth.

The next moment the boy flung himself

face downward on the crushed stone in the car. He threw one frightened glance upward as the protruding tongue of rock flashed above him; then turned his head, and saw the caboose meet it. With a splintering crash it sheared half-way through the sturdy car, flinging a brakeman into the air from the cupola, and tearing the drawhead and couplings apart as if they were cotton strings. With a lurch the caboose whirled half-way round, fell upon its side, and slid down the rocky dump. The next moment Sorrel lost sight of it as the train passed around the bend.



"A TEARING CRASH."

Quivering from head to foot, he got to his feet and looked round him. On the right, the mountain-side swept downward by gentle slopes and sharp plunges for seemingly the distance of a half mile; on the left, it towered upward beyond his vision. The train was rushing along a descending groove in the mountain-side. With a cold thrill of fear and horror he realized that he was alone on the runaway train. Smoke was pouring from the hole in the engine where the stack had been torn off, a white and hissing plume of steam spurted from the whistle-pipe, the cars rocked and battered together, and all went roaring headlong, entirely without control. "I must git offen this thing," said Sorrel, turning round and round. "First thing I know it'll jump the track an' go down the mountain."

With staring eyes he climbed over the sideboard, looking wildly for a place where he might jump clear of the ties. "It'll kill me sure if I jump among them rocks," he half whispered. "I'd better stay here."

But a moment later he saw a long dump of dirt and gravel, and dropping his body low over the sideboard, flung himself outward. With a swimming, awful sense he went over and over through the air and struck the yielding slope and shot downward. Bruised and half-conscious, he scrambled to his feet among some bushes fifty feet from the track. In his excitement he turned and made directly up the dump, digging his toes in the shaly mass and gasping for breath.

In a few moments he was on the track, brushing the dirt from his mouth and eyes.

"Some of them fellers must 'a' been killed back there," he panted; then suddenly held his breath and listened. He could still hear the doomed train madly following the great groove downward. As he turned about excitedly, his mind in a maze of emotions and half-formed purposes, he saw the cuts and fills and shining rails of a track on the mountain-side below him. Seemingly it was a thousand feet below the ground where he was standing. He looked puzzled.

"Oh, I see," he panted; "the track runs clean around the mountain's top and comes out lower down. That same train will go by down there in a few minutes. What's that down there on the bench? That's a side-track an' a wood-yard. Why, there's a passenger train comin' up the mountain!"

An invisible hand seemed to clutch Sorrel's heart and take it from him; his pulses seemed to stop. "That runaway train'll go plumb through that passenger," he gasped. "It'll never leave a thing of 'em on the track."

The imperilled train was possibly two miles distant, but, seen through the clear mountain air, it looked to be much nearer. It was the Northern Mail, scheduled to meet the train the Mogul was pulling at the spur on the mountain-side. The ore train would reach the spur in time, but the hand whose function it had been to close the Mogul's throttle was lifeless now, and the brakeman who had expected to throw the switch was lying among the rocks with a gashed forehead and a broken leg.

Sorrel stood still a moment, all unconscious of the sweet air in his nostrils, the glory of morning on the mountain heights, and the vast panorama spreading away from his feet. The picture of the Northern Mail, curving and straightening, glinting and hiding and reappearing, as it climbed toward the summit, enthralled him. A burning flight of awful things swept through his mind. In a few minutes the beauteous scene would darken with unspeakable tragedy. The monster Mogul would crash through the oncoming train, and hurl everything into ruin. A hundred happy human beings would be rent and battered in the grind and crush, and rail and rock would be reddened with blood.

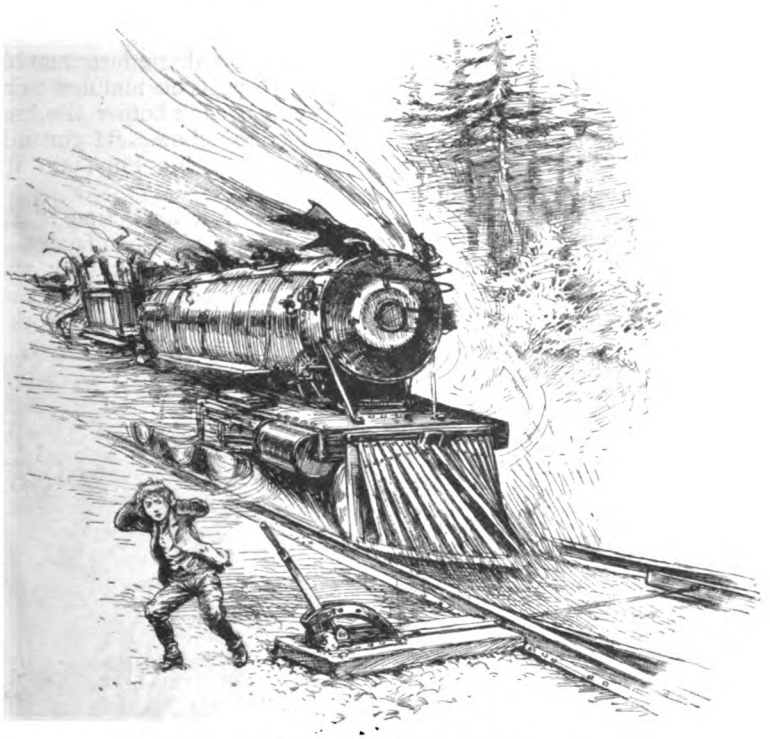
Like one breaking from a horrible dream Sorrel suddenly started, paused hesitatingly, then plunged down the gravelly slope into the woods. His freckled face looked white, his dust-rimmed eyes were wide and glowing.

"If I can on'y git down to that spur in time, an' can git the switch open!" he was saying, as he lunged through fallen tree-tops and over boulders and down shelving breaks. He seemed not far from the lower track when he stopped in consternation; he had all but rushed over the edge of a break which dropped sheer downward for apparently fifty feet. It looked as if he might step from the edge directly into the tops of the pines below. With a strange, whining cry he ran along the brink of the precipice, looking wildly for some place where he might descend. He wasted only a few seconds in the search; then flung himself over the edge, and began hurriedly working his way downward, clinging to vine and bramble and ledge as he went.

In his heart burned so hot a haste, the need of speed was so great, the responsibility that lay upon him was so overwhelming, he could not be careful. Suddenly his feet slipped, his clinging fingers jerked the vine-growth from the rocks, and he whirled backward into space. The unconscious cry which springs of mortal terror had scarcely left his throat when he felt himself strike and a dizzying pain shoot through his frame. He grasped some object, and turned himself; he was hanging in the fork of a tree! Instantly he pulled himself loose, and slipped rapidly to the ground. Here he found the wood more open and the railroad track in sight, and he ran forward with all his might, stooping half-way to the ground. Something was the matter with his side. He was dimly conscious of terrible pain, but he could not stop. He must beat the Mogul to the switch. He was running a race with death.

Almost falling, he came down upon the track. As he crossed it he heard the thunder of the runaway train. With a half-dozen mad bounds he was at the switch. He tore at the lock in a kind of insanity. How should he ever get it loose! Suddenly he snatched up a heavy stone, and delivering blow upon blow, beat the lock to pieces. Jerking out the pin, he threw the lever round, pinned it again, and leaped back, all his features wild and working.

The next moment the train burst round a bend in a storm of noise. Some of the upper works of the huge engine were lying along the boiler-top, and she looked like some mighty animal rushing forward with ears laid back in rage. Sorrel drew farther away, bending almost double, his mouth white and puckered, his eyes staring. With deafening roar the engine and train rushed



"SHE LOOKED LIKE SOME MIGHTY ANIMAL RUSHING FORWARD."

on to the spur. Nothing short of a solid mountain-wall seemed capable of stopping these unbridled bolts of force. The bunting-post at the end of the spur was swept away like a reed, and the whole train, led by the great ram, went headlong down the sloping mountain-side.

Should Sorrel Banks live a thousand years he would not forget that spectacle. Trees leaped from their roots, great spurts of ore-bearing stone shot into the air, about the Mogul whirled a chaos of broken things, a crackling thunder followed it. Sorrel bent forward, gaping, speechless. Down, down the train plunged, cutting through everything, until, a quarter of a mile away, he saw the Mogul leap clear of the earth, and, streaming fire from her open furnace-door, turn once in the air; and then he heard her fall with an appalling crash at the bottom of a cañon. A number of the cars leaped upon her, some rolled over sidewise near the brink. Then silence fell.

Sorrel, pale and labouring for breath, turned toward the track. The Northern Mail stood not 200ft. south of him. A dozen men were running toward him. He turned round and round; he seemed somewhere in a horrible dream. The engineer of the mail was first to reach him.

"Tell us! What's going on here?" he panted.

Sorrel stood bending forward, his hands clutching his side. His twisted mouth worked drily; his poor, soiled clothes were sadly torn; his hands and face were streaked with blood.

"I turned her down the mountain," he whispered, hoarsely. "I s'pose that hankercher with th' bread an' meat in it went down there, too. I didn't git through eatin'."

He turned his glazing eyes around at the wondering men, put one of his hands to his throat, and suddenly plunged forward upon his face. The blue-clad conductor pushed through the crowd, followed by the sheriff from Palouse. At the same moment a dusty youth crept from his hiding-place on the forward truck of the mail car and came up the track. The conductor and most of the others were panting. There was wild talk and exclamations. Sorrel lay limp and still.

"I was hunting for that boy," said the sheriff. "I've been down to Sacramento; couldn't find him, and was coming back."

The conductor of the ore train, hatless,

white-faced, and with a dangling arm, burst out from the trees, and came suddenly down upon the track.

"Halloa, Andy," cried the conductor of the Northern Mail, "what is this? Where's your train?"

The pale fellow looked wildly about him. "Some one throwed the switch, then! I was trying to get here to do it. She's gone down the mountain! I'm glad of that. I expected t' find you all killed. A rock slipped out of Twiller Head, and tore the top works of the engine off and wrecked the caboose. Several of the boys hurt—maybe killed; I didn't wait to see. Who turned the switch?"

"That boy lying there."

"Why, that's the young hobo that was hid in the slack! I told Jim not to disturb him." The conductors looked at each other.

"He's a good one," said the Northern Mail man.

The other nodded. "I guess I'll let 'em all ride after this," he said.

"Halloa, he's come to," said the sheriff, bending over Sorrel. "Young feller, are you ready to go back and tell where the money is?"

Sorrel stared, running his blood-blotched fingers through his tumbled hair.

"Yeh needn't bother *him*," said a voice at the sheriff's elbow. "I got the money here, every cent of it. I'm takin' it back to Mr. Young."

"Well, if it ain't Sime!" said Sorrel, a smile lighting his ashen face.

"Yes, I found out they was after yeh, Sorrel, so I brung th' money back. I didn't want it nohow; I'd ruther work for it. I've beat my way and rid on th' trucks ruther 'en spend it. Here 'tis, sheriff."

"'HALLOA, HE'S COME TO,' SAID THE SHERIFF."

Investigation disclosed the fact that Sorrel had a pair of broken ribs, but never was a prince cared for with greater tenderness. He completed his journey to Sacramento in a Pullman sleeper, and found Aunt Lucy a "good mother."

To-day he holds an enviable position in the employ of the great railway system in whose interest he displayed such masterly courage that morning when he saved the Northern Mail.

Tommy on a Transport.

CHATS WITH TRANSPORT CAPTAINS.

By Alfred T. Story.

THE happiest part of the war, so far as the soldier is concerned, appears to be the voyage to the Cape. On that little trip of six thousand miles Tommy enjoys himself thoroughly. Even if his food is not all that it should be, as it sometimes has not been, he manages not to be miserable. He does his "grumble," throws the objectionable stuff overboard, and then nonchalantly goes to his smoke or his game, and so passes the time. Every captain whose ship has been turned for the nonce into a transport agrees in his admiration of the philosophical way in which Thomas Atkins takes things.

With that view Captain Eaton Travers, of the *Goth*, is in substantial agreement. The practised physiognomist, looking at his picture, will see at once the humorist in his face; and any one of the like turn who has the good luck to meet him and draw him out will be delighted with his views and his anecdotes anent Thomas Atkins and his ways. He has seen much of him, and his notion is that the typical British private is a great, overgrown "kid," a man arrested in development and turned into a machine. "When he is knocking about among bullets with his accustomed indifference he is, no doubt, heroic," says Captain Travers; "but when you see him getting his shave, taking his bath, or standing in a line six or seven hundred long to buy a halfpenny cake, he does not strike you as particularly heroic. But then," adds the captain, "the ridiculous and the heroic are never far apart in this show."

CAPTAIN EATON TRAVERS, OF THE "GOTH."
From a Photograph.

Captain Travers sailed with the *Goth* on the 15th of November to the rescue of the *Persia*, which, it will be remembered, broke her thrust-shaft when about twenty miles from St. Vincent, thus becoming totally disabled, and at the mercy of the wind and sea.

When the Admiralty heard of the mishap that had befallen the *Persia* they decided to send the *Goth* to St. Vincent to carry on her living freight, which consisted of the C Squadron of the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons, numbering 157 men and 154 horses. The *Goth* left Southampton on the 15th of November with twelve officers, 240 men, and eighty-four horses, mostly belonging to No. 4 Ammunition Column.

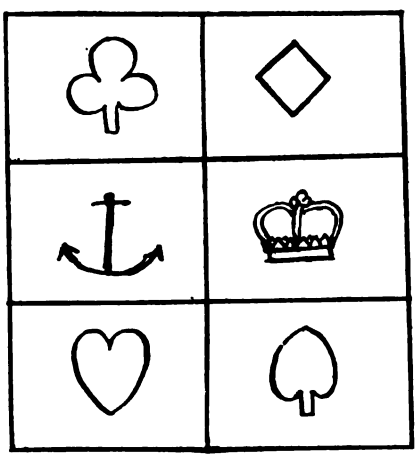
"The horses were London omnibus and tram horses—splendid animals," said Captain Travers, "and no horses ever reached the Cape in such good condition. One horse," he added, "was in such fine trim that she could not be got out of her stall the way she went in. They had to cut away the stanchions to get her out, she was so fat."

The men of H.M.S. *Diadem* assisted in the work of transferring the horses and baggage from the *Persia* to the *Goth*, "and," said Captain Travers, with admiration, "the work was done in less than four hours."

Captain Travers's account of life on board a troopship is that the réveille was sounded at six o'clock. After the men had rolled up their hammocks and stowed them in the racks, they were run round the hurricane deck until seven o'clock. "Eighteen times round the deck, full pelt, put them in fine form for their breakfast," said the captain, "to which they were piped, or rather bugled, at eight o'clock." After breakfast they were put through various physical drills, which occupied most of the morning. All who were not on other duty had to fall in. Each day so many were told off as sentinels for the decks and so many for cleaning arms. If the head-quarters staff was on board the band played every morning, and the drums and fifes in the afternoon. The band played every night at dinner if the weather permitted. There were instruction classes every day, squads of men being given instruction about South African matters. Firing classes also were of daily occurrence.

"We improvised a target which we towed 250yds. behind the ship," said Captain Travers. "This was for the Reservists, and it was astonishing to see the number of hits they made at that distance. When the target was hauled in it was quite riddled."

In the afternoon there was no drill, or very little. Tommy had his time to himself, and it was usually spent in gambling. "I was surprised," said Captain Travers, "to see so much of it, and I made a remark to that effect to one of the officers. He said he would rather see the men's money gambled away into the hands of one man than have it remain in their own pockets. If they had lost their money before they got ashore they could not squander it in drink and make beasts of themselves." As a rule, but not, of course, without exception, Tommy makes the worst use of his money, and there are certain men in every regiment who know how to practise on their weakness. As soon as Tommy has a spare moment these men are down in a corner of the deck, spreading their traps for the unwary. "Sometimes it is 'House,'" said Captain Travers, "but more frequently on my ship it was another game which was played with dice. I don't know what they call it; but it was like this"—and Captain Travers took out a pencil and made a sketch of the apparatus.



ONE OF TOMMY'S GAMES.
From a Sketch by Capt. Travers.

"The dice has on its six sides the same figures as the board. A man puts his money on a square; if the dice turns up the figure his coin covers he takes all the money on the board. If the figure turned up is the same as none of the figures on which money is placed, the bank takes the lot. On the top of the board there is generally written the legend, '5s. limit.' But they often go much beyond that, and it is astonishing what they win and lose. The holders of the bank are generally very artful men. I heard one man sing out as I passed him while he was laying out his board, 'Na then, me 'arties, if yer don't specalate, y'll never accumalate.'

"You get all kinds among soldiers," remarked Captain Travers, "just as in ordinary life. You would be surprised at the talent that is often displayed at one of their entertainments. Among the men we had in the *Goth* there was one of the cleverest ventriloquists I ever heard. He was the funniest character, too, you could meet with. He had got the dolls and everything complete for his performance, and the way he manœuvred his rag puppets and made them jabber was enough to make you split your sides with laughter. The Tommies enjoy it, I can tell you! It is no uncommon thing in the Army to find men of this type, and they think so much of their dolls or other paraphernalia that they would leave behind anything they had rather than their playthings. An officer told me that once, when they were campaigning in India—on which occasions, of course, the baggage is reduced to a minimum—one of these worthies' dolls was found stuffed in the colonel's valise. He thought that was the only way of making sure of their going to the front, and as his mates were of the same way of thinking, the thing was done, but, of course, when they were discovered no one could imagine how they came there."

The *Goth* is a fine ship, but hardly perhaps so fine as the *Kildonan Castle*, which was taken over by the Government for trooping before she was finished, so that she was fitted specially for carrying soldiers. It is a sight to look the length of her deck and see the men feeding. Something like two thousand can sit down at once. "In our last voyage we were full up," said Captain Hay, one of the veterans of the Castle Line, when asked about his occupation of troop-carrying. "You could hardly move for soldiers. They were everywhere, except in the parts of the ship reserved for the officers. They seemed to enjoy themselves very much, and very few of them were sick. There was some grumbling about the food, however, and they used to go and throw it overboard directly they got it. It was food supplied by the Admiralty. This voyage," said Captain Hay, "our company provide the food, and we carry fresh meat to last the whole of the voyage. I don't think," added the captain, "that Tommy would have complained without a cause."

As regards this question of food, it seems

undoubted that the Admiralty at first palmed off a good deal of old and very dubious stores upon the troops. During the last two months I have been on board a number of transports, and in almost every instance I heard of "grub"—it appears the most fitting name for the stuff — being provided for Tommy's behoof that was — well, hardly the food on which to feed the heroes that were serving the country in its time of need. It was freely said by men who knew what they were talking about that the persons who were responsible for the supply of such meat "ought to be well hanged." On one of the transports beef was served out from cases bearing date 1874, "and it stank so infamously," said a non-commissioned officer, "that we were obliged to put it through the port-holes." One of the rank and file, a Cockney, remarked, "It was pickled when I was a kid, s'elp me. Then I wanted it—bad; but now I can't stomick it." But even in the face of such an affront, Tommy preserved his good humour. He grumbled, threw the stuff overboard, and then, raising his voice, sang:—

Frustrate their knavish tricks,
Go-o-o-d save the Queen!

CAPTAIN HAY, OF THE "KILDONAN CASTLE."
From a Photo. by Chas. E. Webber, Leytonstone.

To Captain Hay, as to most other skippers, T. A. appears to have been a never-ending source of amusement, and he had some laughable incidents to record about him. The troops are supplied with all sorts of mineral and other temperance drinks at the canteen, but no alcoholic liquors of any description. To open his ginger-beer and other bottles a number of corkscrews were provided; but after the first day not a single one was to be found. "Several were then suspended by chains in different parts of the vessel," said Captain Hay, "but those also were taken and not returned. That was the end of the matter. No more were provided, and Tommy had to get the cork out of his bottle the best way he could. It was amusing," the captain added, with a laugh, "to see how some of them tried to take it out of me for not giving them more corkscrews. They would come underneath where I was standing and begin to force out their corks facing me, taking a sly sight at me the while, hoping to plant a cork in my face. When I caught them at it, and threatened to report them, they would go off with a laugh. Sad dogs!" commented Captain Hay.

Most of the day was, of course, taken up with drilling. When they were not drilling they were playing "House." "All over the ship," said Captain Hay, "they would be squatting in groups of a dozen intent on this game. I never saw the game before — perhaps you never did; possibly it is only known to soldiers. It is supplied to them, I believe, by the War Office, and is the nearest approach to gambling that is sanctioned; but, on the quiet, much more is done. The game is played in this way: One man has twelve cards containing rows of numbers, all the cards being different. In addition, he has a lot of little discs or counters, each bearing a number corresponding with one of the numbers on the cards. Each man playing buys a card, for which he pays a penny. Then, when all are supplied, the man who provides the cards shakes up the counters in his hat, takes one out, and calls out the number. The man who has the corresponding number on his card covers it. So the game goes on, the man with the counters calling out, '19, 51, 64, 20,' and so forth until one of the players finds all the numbers on his card covered, when he cries out, ''Ouse!' If it is found on examination that his figures tally with the counters passed, he takes 10d. of the 1s. paid for the cards, the man who keeps the bank pocketing the odd 2d. Then the cards are served out again, and the game proceeds as before. Thus they will go on for hours," said Captain Hay, "and they are at it in every part of the ship; so that when they are not at drill or asleep you can't move without hearing the everlasting rigmarole, '21, 5, 76, 9, 32, top o' the 'ouse!'—'top of the house'

15		54	70	13
	23	2	85	31
6	19	90		63

TOMMY'S GAME OF "HOUSE."

being the name they give to the figure 90, which is the highest on the card. They have similar names for other numbers: Sergeant Kelly, for instance, signifying 45. The figures, or nicknames for them, are sung out at the top of the voice. At last the thing gets on to your nerves to such an extent that you dream of it, and the captains of passing ships will halloa out to you as they pass, '30, 19, 4, top o' the 'ouse!'"

A little scene that took place at the end of the voyage is worth recording. "When we were lying in Table Bay," said Captain Hay, "the first batch of Canadians arrived. I at once sent up the signal, 'Well done, Canada,' and sounded my siren. The other ships in the harbour took up the cry, and in less than five minutes there was such a hullaballoo in the port that the people of Cape Town thought surely Ladysmith had been relieved, or else Kimberley."

The chief engineer of the *Kildonan Castle*, in answer to a remark on the busy scene when she was taking on board troops and her last stores before starting on her January trip, observed, "It is the work of men, sir," and he seemed proud to think he was taking part in it. As well, indeed, he might!

The commander of the Union Line *Ghoorka*, Captain Moseley, appeared to be in thorough agreement with him; for though, as he said, trooping was very hard work, and necessitated the putting out of all the strength and knowledge you have, yet he would not change posts with any man living at the present juncture. He had got to like Tommy, and after four voyages carrying out troops he had come to know the Queen's regulations as well as the soldiers themselves. He did not think he should like to go through the drill as they had to do, officers as well as men, the former being put through their facings by the adjutant every morning before breakfast. Probably, he thought, he should feel like the men of the Railway Corps from the Crewe works, which went out in the *Ghoorka*. They were, of course, Reservists, and had to be drilled like the rest. But being older men, they did not take to it so kindly as the regular Tommies, especially the standing on their toes; "and one of them made us laugh very heartily," said Captain Moseley, "by the remark that there was 'too dam much drill and not enough work,' for his taste. That's the way it would strike me," added the captain.

It was, however, very necessary that all should drill, else, with the good feeding they

CAPTAIN MOSELEY, OF THE "GHOORKA."
From a Photo. by Debenham & Smith, Southampton.

had, they would become soft and flabby. As it was, the men arrived at the Cape in splendid fettle. The twenty-one days at sea, with no beer or spirits to drink, made them hard and fit. The drill was not overdone. They had plenty of time for rest and amusement. Boxes of games were sent on board for them, and then they got amusement out of their shooting practice. "We rigged up a derrick for them over the starboard side of the ship," said Captain Moseley, "and from it had a bottle suspended at the end of a string. The men stood a little forward and fired at the bottle. The Colonel of the Grenadiers, who were going out with us, gave sixpence a bottle for every one hit, and it was surprising how many sixpences were won. The amount the Colonel had to pay for bottles smashed during the voyage amounted in all to £35."

Captain Moseley spoke with great admiration of the singing of the men at service on Sundays. There were so many on board that only half the troops could attend at a time, the other half having to wait until the following Sunday. On his last voyage he had a choir of thirty-five, all from the ranks, and their singing was splendid. Another Union Line captain remarked in a similar strain of Tommy's singing at church. It was, he said, the thing that struck him more than anything else. Others spoke in the same strain.

At Gib, said Captain Moseley, one of Her Majesty's ships gave them a warm send-off, manning the rigging and the band playing "The British Grenadiers." They had another hearty greeting when they met one of the New Zealand Company's ships off Cape Verde. The people on board had from them their first news of the war. The captain asked him if he would steam in as close as possible. He accordingly steamed alongside, and their pipes and drums struck up. They were answered by the New Zealander, which gave them a hearty three times three. After that they had sixteen days of rough weather, during which time they saw nobody. "We had, however, an amusing incident to 'liven us up the day we crossed the Line," said Captain Moseley. "There had been some talk to the effect that we should cross that day, and Tommy was on the *qui vive*. In the evening one of the officers, while dressing for dinner, said to his servant, a man of course of his regiment, 'We shall cross the Line I understand about eight o'clock.' 'Begging your pardon, sir, we've already crossed it,' returned the man. 'We went over at four o'clock. We all of us felt it, sir, and one of our fellows cried out: "What ho, she bumps!"' The truth was that in the afternoon the wind had freshened, and we encountered a heavy southerly swell. About four o'clock the ship took a plunge into a big head sea, at the same time throwing up her stern, so that her propellers lifted quite out of the water, and went round with a whiz, sending a sharp tremor right through the ship. This was what Tommy took for the vessel's performance in 'crossing the Line,' and 'bumping' as she did it."

Speaking of the amusement they got out of the voyage, Captain Moseley recalled the fact that some of the men went on board with white pugarees, and in order to give them something like the regulation khaki colour, they had to dye them with coffee and other substitutes for the proper colourer. He sold the officers a hundredweight of coffee for the purpose. As that was not sufficient they had to fall back on permanganate of potash. "The pugarees did not come out of the lye quite the right hue then," said Captain Moseley; "but a few days of African dust would rectify any shortcoming, for African dust is true khaki."

CAPTAIN WILFORD, OF THE "GAUL."
From a Photo. by Debenham & Smith, Southampton.

Captain Wilford, of the *Gaul*, took out the "Fighting Fifth" in September—half of them old campaigners from Egypt. This was the first batch of troops for the relief of the situation in South Africa. There were about 1,200 men in all, 600 of them being Reservists. They were all in the best of spirits, and enjoyed

themselves thoroughly on the voyage. "To me," said Captain Wilford, "it was very pleasant to see them in such fine spirits." In his second voyage with troops he took out a full company of the Royal Engineers, a company of the Army Medical Corps, and the Rifle Brigade. The Duke of Connaught was present and saw them off, and took luncheon on board.

"We gave the men plenty to eat on the voyage," said Captain Wilford, "and as they got also a good deal of physical drill, they were kept in excellent condition. Half an hour's run round the deck daily, besides the drill, did not leave them much time to go to waste. The officers," continued Captain Wilford, "thought we fed them too well, and Tommy himself was so surprised at his feeding that his first view of it was that it was a bit of bluff to start off with, and that the tables would be turned, or at least transformed, as soon as we got well away from land. When no change occurred they said the swells at the War Office would burst with spite when they heard of it.

CAPTAIN SYLVESTER, OF THE "GERMAN."
From a Photo. by Chalkley, Gould, & Co., Southampton.

"Twice a week they had a sing-song, which they immensely enjoyed," said Captain Wilford. Asked what they liked best in the way of songs, he said they had a good many comic songs which appeared very popular with them; but they seemed to like best of all a certain sort of sentimental ditty.

This was borne out by Captain Sylvester, of the *German*, another of the Union Line boats, who gave it as his opinion that all the Tommies had a great liking for singing about their mothers. Tommy's mother was

S.S. "German" Voyage

Copy of Bill of Fare for Troops 1435 strength.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
Oatmeal porridge Beef steak & onions Potatoes	Oatmeal porridge Bloaters Hot. Hash	Oatmeal porridge Irish Stew Curry & Rice	Oatmeal porridge Kippered Herrings Potatoes & Butter	Oatmeal porridge Beef steak & onions Potatoes	Oatmeal porridge Pindon Haddock Potatoes & Butter	Oatmeal porridge Irish Stew Bullin
Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
Soup Roast mutton Potatoes & Cabbage Plum pudding	Soup Roast Beef Potatoes Calavances	Soup Corned Beef Potatoes & Pease Pickles. Stewed Prunes & Rice	Soup Roast mutton Potatoes	Soup Roast Beef Potatoes Plum pudding	Soup Boiled mutton & suet pdg Potatoes Stewed Apples & Rice	Soup Roast Beef Potatoes & Cabbage
Tea	Tea	Tea	Tea	Tea	Tea	Tea
Jam, Bullin, Cake	Cheese, Bullin	Marmalade, Bullin	Hashed meat Potatoes, Butter	Jam, Bullin Cake	Marmalade Bullin Buns	Hot. Hash Jam & Bullin

L. Sylvester
Chief Steward

TOMMY'S BILL OF FARE ON BOARD THE "GERMAN."

generally "in her lonely grave," and she was not infrequently busy thinking of Tommy as he "padded the earth's round" above. Sometimes it was his "sister dear" he sang about, but more often someone else's sister.

Captain Sylvester expressed a decided liking for Tommy, although he found him full of the faults of his qualities. He was the most reckless of souls, and anything he did not want at the passing moment was utterly disregarded. No end of illustrated magazines and periodicals were sent on board for his amusement and instruction, but after looking at the pictures for a minute or two, away they would go into the sea.

The captain of the *German* said he would at any time rather have soldiers for passengers than third-classers. They were less trouble. If anything went wrong the officer's command settled the difficulty at once. But with a lot of third-class passengers there was no end of trouble and complaint. In his last trip, when he took out troops and passengers too, he had a deal of trouble with some of the steerage folk, more especially, however, with a number of Germans, who were on their way to the Cape. They objected to the bugle, and asked him to stop it. They objected to the rifle and pistol practice, saying they had not bargained for that. They objected to the soldiers, to their games, to their laughter and frolic, to their being about where they—the passengers—wanted to be, and asked the captain to keep a section of the deck clear of the men in khaki, so that they might enjoy their lives in peace and quietness.

CAPTAIN HAMMOND, OF THE "CHANNING."
From a Photograph.

Messrs. Lamport and Holt have three of their ships acting under Admiralty orders, the *Channing*, the *Cavour*, and the *Raphael*, the two former as troopers, the last-named as a store-ship. Captain Hammond, of the *Channing*, is a typical seaman, and thoroughly enjoyed the work of taking out troops to the seat of war. He had his faults to find with Tommy, but it was more particularly the Cockney description to which he had objections. Not many of them, however, had found their way on to his ship. On his last voyage he took out the 65th Howitzer Battery, quite a superior lot of men (he said), and the run was quite a pleasant one. There were in all 300 men, with about the same number of horses. They were always active, and had no time to get anything like the mopes. They were up by five o'clock when it was light at that hour, and after coffee they gave the horses their feed. Then there was a muster of the men and some physical exercise, followed by breakfast at eight o'clock. After breakfast the horses were got out and paraded up and down the deck. This took them pretty well up to dinner-time, after which there was a general inspection. That business closed, the men were at liberty to enjoy their games—tug-of-war, sack and other races, and for those who preferred, cards, dominoes, etc.

"Altogether we had a very enjoyable time," said Captain Hammond. "The soldiers behaved themselves well, although they did grumble a bit at their food, and I don't wonder. They were not fed as they should be. The ship feeds the officers, and they eat of the best; but the War Office supplies the 'grub' for the men, and the stuff that is given them is a disgrace. There is too much lordship and red-tape at head-quarters, it appears to me," said Captain Hammond. "Our company, I must say, did their best for the soldiers. They gave every man on board a couple of apples and a couple of oranges every day, and they are fine things to keep men in health. They also gave each man a pound of tobacco and pipes.

"We rigged up a target," continued Captain Hammond, "so that they could practise shooting with their revolvers. But I must say, taking them altogether, they were not good shots; and the officers were worse than the men. One officer, aiming at the target, which was 6ft. above the deck, missed

it and sent a bullet through my sounder, which was on the deck beneath the target." Captain Hammond was the more surprised at the men's poor shooting after meeting some of the Australian Volunteers at the Cape, many of whom told him that there was not one of them who could not shoot an apple off a man's head at full gallop, either with rifle or revolver.

"The men liked the ship," said Captain Hammond, "and at the end of the voyage they expressed the hope that they might have the good luck to come back in her. I wish they may, every mother's son of them! I gave them a good Christmas dinner before they left the ship, and I didn't forget the plum-pudding either. They gave me three cheers as they disembarked, and said they would bring me a lock of Kruger's hair."

As typical a sailor as any in the batch here named is Captain Macnicol, of the Allan Liner *Bavarian*, to which he was appointed when she issued from the builders' hands some five months ago. Captain Macnicol has had a long record with the same company, following upon a career of rare adventure. The *Bavarian's* first work, like that of the *Kildonan Castle*, was conveying troops to the Cape. She sailed on her first voyage on November 8th, from Liverpool, carrying contingents of the Dublin Fusiliers, Connaught Rangers, the Royal Engineers, the Royal Army Medical Corps, and some half-dozen foreign attachés, making Cape Town in seventeen days.

Captain Macnicol is as enthusiastic as most other transport skippers in his admiration of Tommy's many good qualities. "They were like a lot of schoolboys out on a picnic," was his comment, and he has some amusing yarns of the endless frolic that is in him and the endless tricks he is up to. Unfortunately, space will not permit of more than one, and that may not have occurred in his ship. Shaving is a great institution on board, and, as there are only a few Tommies who have the barber's art, and the work has to be done expeditiously, it is one of the sights of a morning to see the chin-scraping go on. Each shaver has one if not two assistants. These do the lathering, and pass the men on in turn. Not infrequently one man will operate on one side of the shavee's face and then pass to the next man, leaving another operator to shave the other side. It saves passing from side to side, and thus economizes time. One day there was a game on with a Tommy, either for a bet or to pay him out for something. He was hustled out of his place, and so kept back till he was the last of all. Then he sat down, was duly lathered, and underwent the operation of the first shaver. But, having gone thus far, he was left, half-shaved, and with the lather still on the unshaved half. At that moment the bugle sounded for the company to fall in for drill, and away sprang latherers, shavers, and all, and Tommy, half-shaved and half-mad, had to run too, and appear in his place with a fine, stubbly growth on one side his face to match nothing on the other—"for all the world," said the captain, "like a half-cleaned picture in a dealer's window."

CAPTAIN MACNICOL, OF THE "BAVARIAN."
From a Photograph.

A Master of Craft.

By W. W. Jacobs.

XXIII.

TIME as it rolled on set at rest any doubts Miss Tyrell might have had concerning the fate of Captain Flower, and under considerable pressure from Fraser, she had consented to marry him in June. The only real reason for choosing that month was, that it was close at hand, though Fraser supplied her with several others to choose from. Their engagement could hardly have been said to have been announced, for with the exception of old Mr. Fraser and the crew of the *Swallow*, who had gleaned the fact for themselves without any undue strain on their intellects, there was nobody to tell.

The boy was the first to discover it. According to his own indignant account he went down to the cabin to see whether there was anything he could do, and was promptly provided with three weeks' hard labour by his indignant skipper. A little dissertation in which he indulged in the forecastle on division of labour met with but scant response; Joe said that work was good for boys, and Mr. Green said that he knew a boy who worked eighteen hours a day, and then used to do sums in his sleep to improve his education. The other men set their wits to work then, and proved to have so large an acquaintance with a type of boy that Tommy loathed, that he received a mild chastisement for impertinence to his elders and betters.

It wanted but two days to the wedding. The *Swallow* was lying in the river, her deck unoccupied except for Mr. Green and the boy, who were smoking in the bows, and the ship's cat, which, with one eye on Mr. Green, was stalking the frying-pan. Fraser had gone ashore on business connected with his wedding-garments, and Poppy Tyrell, with all her earthly belongings in a couple of boxes, sat in the cabin dreaming of her future.

"JOE SAID THAT WORK WAS GOOD FOR BOYS."

A boat bumped against the side of the steamer, and Mr. Green, looking round, observed the long form of Joe scrambling over the side. His appearance betokened alarm and haste, and Mr. Green, after a brief remark on the extravagance, not to say lordliness, of a waterman's skiff when a hail would have taken the ship's boat to him, demanded to know what was the matter.

"Send that boy below," said Joe, hastily.

"Whaffor?" inquired the gentleman interested, rebelliously.

"You go below," repeated Joe, sternly, "'fore I take you by the scruff o' your little neck and drop you down."

The boy, with a few remarks about the rights of man in general and ships' boys in particular, took his departure, and Joe, taking the startled Mr. Green by the arm, led him farther aft.

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"You've got a 'ead on you, Will-yum, I know," he said, in a fierce whisper.

"People have said so," remarked the other, modestly. "What's the row?"

For answer, Joe pointed to the cabin, and that with so much expression on his features that Mr. Green, following his gaze, half expected to see something horrible emerge from the companion.

"It's all up," said the tall seaman, poetically. "You can put the wedding-dress away in brown paper, and tell the church bells as there is no call for 'em to ring: Cap'n Flower has turned up ag'in."

"WHAT?" cried the astonished Mr. Green.

"I see 'im," replied Joe. "I was just goin' on the wharf as I passed to speak to old George, when I see 'im talking to 'im. He didn't see me, an' I come off 'ere as fast as my legs could carry me. Now, wot's to be done? You've got the 'ead-piece."

Mr. Green scratched the article in question and smiled feebly.

"On'y two days, and they would ha' been married," said Joe; "bit 'ard, ain't it? I'm glad as I can be as he's safe, but he might ha' waited a day or two longer."

"Did George seem scared?" inquired his friend.

"Wot's that got to do with it?" demanded Joe, violently. "Are you goin' to set that 'ed-piece to work or are you not?"

Mr. Green coughed confusedly, and attempted to think with a brain which was already giddy with responsibility.

"I don't want to do anything that isn't straight and gentlemanly," he remarked.

"Straight?" repeated Joe. "Look 'ere! Cap'n Fraser's our old man, ain't he? Very good, it's our dooty to stand by 'im. But, besides that, it's for the young lady's sake: it's easy to see that she's as fond of him as she can be, and she's that sort o' young lady that if she come up now and told me to jump overboard, I'd do it."

"You could swim ashore easy, assented Mr. Green.

"They was to be married Thursday morning," continued Joe, "and now here's Cap'n Flower and no 'ead-piece on the ship. Crool, I call it."

"She's a very nice young lady," said the mortified Mr. Green; "always a pleasant smile for everybody."

"He'll come aboard 'ere as safe as heggs is heggs," said Joe, despondently. "Wot's to be done?"

He folded his arms on the side and stood ruefully watching the stairs. He was quite confident that there were head-pieces walking the earth, to which a satisfactory solution of this problem would have afforded no difficulty whatever, and he shook his own sadly, as he thought of its limitations.

"It only wants a little artfulness, Will-yum," he suggested, encouragingly.

"Get hold of him and make him drunk for three days," murmured Mr. Green, in a voice so low that he half hoped Joe would not hear it.

"And then boil 'im," said the indignant seaman, without looking round. "Ah! Here he comes. Now, you've got to be astonished, mind; but don't make a noise, in case it fetches the young lady up."

He pointed to the stairs, and his friend, going to the side, saw

"HE POINTED TO THE STAIRS."

a passenger just stepping into a boat. The two men then turned away until, at sight of Captain Flower's head appearing above the side, they went off into such silent manifestations of horror and astonishment that he feared for their reason.

"It's 'is voice," said Joe, hastily, as Flower bawled out to them with inconsiderate loudness. "I never thought to see you ag'in, sir; I 'eard you was drowned months and months ago."

He took the captain's proffered hand somewhat awkwardly, and stood closely scanning him. The visitor was bronzed with southern suns, and looked strong and well. His eye was bright and his manner retained all its old easy confidence.

"Ah, I've been through something since I saw you last, my lad," he said, shaking his head. "The great thing is, Joe, to always keep your head above water."

"Yessir," said the seaman, slowly; "but I 'eard as 'ow you went down with the *Golden Cloud*, sir."

"So I did," said Flower, somewhat boastfully, "and came up again with the nearest land a mile or two under my feet. It was dark, but the sea was calm, and I could see the brute that sunk us keeping on her course. Then I saw a hen-coop bobbing up and down close by, and I got to it just in time, and hung on to it until I could get my breath again and shout. I heard a hail a little way off, and by-and-by I got alongside two of our chaps making themselves comfortable on two or three spars. There were three drowned fowls in my coop, and we finished them on the fourth day just as a whaler hove in sight and took us off. We were on her over four months, and then we sighted the barque *California*, homeward bound, and she brought us home. I landed at the Albert Docks this morning, and here I am, hard as nails."

Joe, with a troubled eye in the direction of the cabin, murmured that it did him credit, and Mr. Green made a low hissing noise, intended to signify admiration. Flower, with a cheery smile, looked round the deck.

"Where's Fraser?" he inquired.

"He's ashore, sir," said Joe, hastily. "I don't know when he'll be back."

"Never mind, I'll wait," was the reply. "George was telling me he is to be married on Thursday."

Joe gasped and eyed him closely.

"So I've 'eard, sir."

"And Captain Barber's married, too, George tells me," said Flower. "I suppose that's right?"

"So I've 'eard, sir," said Joe, again.

Flower turned and paced a little up and down the deck, deep in thought. He had arrived in London three hours before to find that Poppy had left her old lodgings without leaving any clue as to her whereabouts. Then he had gone on to the Wheelers, without any result, so far as he was concerned, although the screams of the unfortunate Mrs. Wheeler were still ringing in his ears.

"I'll go down below and wait," he said, stopping before the men. "Tell Fraser I'm there, or else he'll be startled. I nearly killed poor old George. The man's got no pluck at all."

He moved slowly towards the cabin and Poppy, leaving the men exchanging glances of hopeless consternation. Then, as he turned to descend, the desperate Joe ran up and laid a detaining hand on his sleeve.

"You can't go down there," he whispered, and dragged him forcibly away.

"Why not?" demanded the other, struggling. "Let go, you fool."

He wrenched himself free, and stood gazing angrily at the excited seaman.

"There's a lady down there," said the latter, in explanation.

"Well, I sha'n't eat her," said the indignant Flower. "Don't you put your hands on me again, my lad, or you'll repent it. Who is it?"

Joe eyed him helplessly and, with a dim idea of putting off the discovery as long as possible, mysteriously beckoned him forward.

"Who is it?" asked the puzzled Flower, advancing a pace or two.

The seaman hesitated. Then a sudden inspiration, born of the memories of last year's proceedings, seized him, and he shook with the brilliancy of it. He looked significantly at Mr. Green, and his voice trembled with excitement.

"The lady who used to come down to the *Foam* asking for Mr. Robinso ," he stammered.

"*What?*" said the dismayed Flower, coming briskly forward and interposing two masts, the funnel, and the galley between himself and the cabin. "Why on earth didn't you say so before?"

"Well, I didn't know what to do, sir," said Joe, humbly; "it ain't for the likes of me to interfere."

Flower knit his brows, and tapped the deck with his foot.

"What's she doing down there?" he said,

irritably; "*she's* not going to marry Fraser, is she?"

Joe gulped, and tried to think.

"Yessir," he said, at length.

"Yessir," said Mr. Green, with an intuitive feeling that a lie of such proportions required backing.

Flower stood in amaze, pondering the situation, and a grin slowly broke the corners of his mouth.

"Don't tell Fraser I've been here," he said, at length.

"No, sir," said Joe, eagerly.

"I'll see him in a day or two," said Flower, "after he's married. You understand me, Joe?"

"Yessir," said Joe, again. "Shall I put you ashore, sir?"

He was almost dancing with impatience lest Fraser or Poppy should spoil his plans by putting in an appearance, but before Flower could reply Mr. Green gave a startled exclamation, and the captain, with a readiness born of his adventures of the last year, promptly vanished down the forecastle as Miss Tyrell appeared on deck. Joe closed the scuttle, and with despair gnawing at his vitals sat on it.

Unconscious of the interest she was exciting, Poppy Tyrell, who had tired of the solitude of the cabin, took a seat on a camp-stool, and, folding her hands in her lap, sat enjoying the peace and calm of the summer evening. Joe saw defeat in the very moment of victory; even while he sat, the garrulous Tommy might be revealing State secrets to the credulous Flower.

"Get her down below," he whispered, fiercely, to Mr. Green. "Quick!"

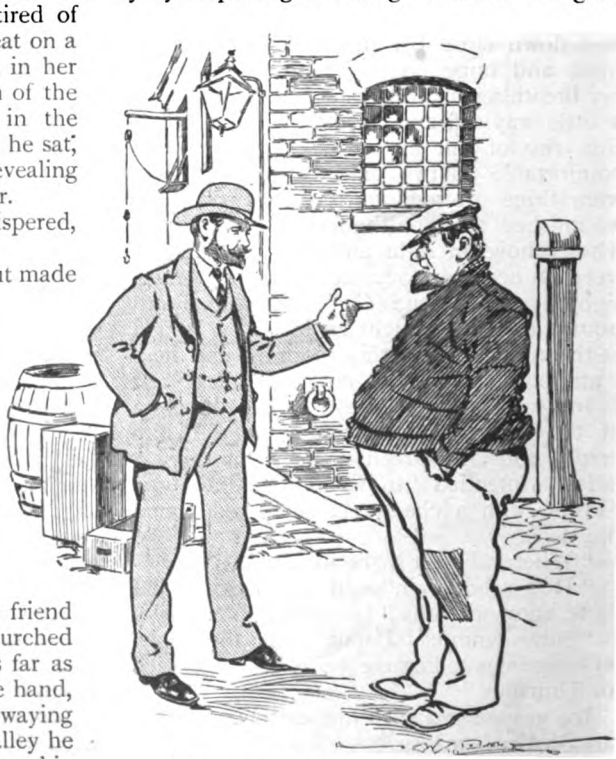
His friend stared at him aghast, but made no movement. He looked at the unconscious Poppy, and then back at the mouthing figure seated on the scuttle. His brain was numbed. Then a little performance on Charlie's part a week or two before, which had cost that gentleman his berth, occurred to him, and he moved slowly forward.

For a moment the astonished Joe gazed at him in wrathful bewilderment; then his brow cleared, and his old estimate of his friend was revived again. Mr. Green lurched rather than walked, and, getting as far as the galley, steadied himself with one hand, and stood, with a foolish smile, swaying lightly in the breeze. From the galley he got with great care to the side of the ship opposite Poppy, and, clutching the shrouds, beamed on her amiably. The girl gave one rapid glance at him and then, as he tottered to the wheel and hung on by the spokes, turned her head away. What it cost the well-bred Mr. Green to stagger as he came by her again and then roll helplessly at her feet will never be known, and he groaned in spirit as the girl, with one scornful glance in his direction, rose quietly and went below again.

Satisfied that the coast was clear, he rose to his feet and signalled hurriedly to Joe, then he mounted sentry over the companion, grinning feebly at the success of his manœuvres as he heard a door closed and locked below.

"You pull me round to the wharf, Joe," said Flower, as he tumbled hurriedly into the boat. "I don't want to run into Fraser, and I just want to give old George the tip to keep quiet for a day or two."

The seaman obeyed readily, and exchanged a triumphant glance with Mr. Green as they shot by the steamer's stern. His invention was somewhat tried by Flower's questions on the way to the wharf, but he answered them satisfactorily, and left him standing on the jetty imparting to George valuable thoughts



"IMPARTING TO GEORGE VALUABLE THOUGHTS."

on the maxim that speech is silver and silence golden.

Joe tried a few of the principal points with Tommy upon his return to the steamer, the necessity for using compliments instead of threats to a ship's boy being very galling to his proud nature.

"You be a good boy like you always 'ave been, Tommy," he said, with a kindly smile, "and don't breathe a word about wot's 'appened this evening, and 'ere's a tanner for you to spend--a whole tanner."

Tommy bit it carefully, and, placing it in his pocket, whistled thoughtfully.

"Fill your pipe out o' that, young 'un," said Mr. Green, proffering his pouch with a flourish.

The boy complied, and putting a few reserve charges in his pocket, looked up at him shrewdly.

"Is it very partikler?" he inquired, softly.

"*Partikler!*" repeated Joe. "I should think it is. He can't think 'ow partikler it is, can 'e, Will-yum?"

Mr. Green shook his head.

"It's worth more than a tanner then," said Tommy, briskly.

"Look 'ere," said Joe, suppressing his natural instincts by a strong effort. "You keep quiet for three days, and I'll be a friend to you for life. And so will Will-yum, won't you, old man?"

Mr. Green, with a smile of rare condescension, said that he would.

"Look 'ere," said the bargainer, "I'll tell you what I'll do for you: you gimme another tanner each instead, and that's letting you off cheap, 'cos your friendship 'ud be worth pounds and pounds to anybody what wanted it."

He gazed firmly at his speechless, would-be friends and waited patiently until such time as their emotion would permit of a reply. Joe was the first to speak, and Tommy listened unmoved to a description of himself which would have made a jelly-fish blush.

"Tanner each," he said, simply; "I don't want friends who can talk like that to save sixpence."

Mr. Green, with a sarcasm which neither Tommy nor Joe understood, gave him the amount in coppers. His friend followed suit, and the boy, having parted with his reputation at a fair price, went below, whistling.

Fraser came on board soon afterwards, and Mr. Green, with his celebrated drunken scene fresh in his mind, waited nervously for developments. None ensuing, he confided to Joe his firm conviction that Miss Tyrell was a young lady worth dying for, and gloomily wondered whether Fraser was good enough for her. After which, both men, somewhat elated, fell to comparing head-pieces.

Joe was in a state of nervous tension while steam was getting up, and, glued to the side of the steamer, strained his eyes, gazing at the dimly-lit stairs. As they steamed rapidly down the river his spirits rose, and he said vaguely that something inside him seemed to tell him that his trouble would not be in vain.

"There's two days yet," said Mr. Green. "I wish they was well over."

Captain Flower, who had secured a bed at the Three Sisters' Hotel in Aldgate, was for widely different reasons wishing the same thing. His idea was to waylay Fraser immediately after the marriage and obtain Poppy's address, his natural vanity leading him to believe that Miss Tipping would at once insist upon a change of bridegroom, if she heard of his safety before the ceremony was performed. In these circumstances he had to control his impatience as best he could, and with a view to preventing his safety becoming known too soon, postponed writing to his uncle until the day before the wedding.

XXIV.

HE posted his letter in the morning, and after a midday meal took train to Seabridge, and here the reception of which he had dreamed for many weary months awaited him. The news of his escape had spread round the town like wildfire, and he had hardly stepped out of the train before the station-master was warmly shaking hands with him. The porters followed suit, the only man who displayed any hesitation being the one from the lamp-room, and he patted him on the back several times before venturing. The centre of a little enthusiastic knot of fellow-townsmen, he could hardly get clear to receive the hearty grip of Captain Barber, or the chaste salute with which Mrs. Barber inaugurated her auntship; but he got free at last, and, taking an arm of each, set off blithely down the road, escorted by neighbours.

As far as the cottage their journey was a veritable triumphal progress, and it was some time before the adventurous mariner was permitted to go inside; but he got free at last, and Mrs. Barber, with a hazy idea of the best way to treat a shipwrecked fellow-

creature, however remote the accident, placed before him a joint of cold beef and a quantity of hot coffee. It was not until he had made a good meal and lit his pipe that Uncle Barber, first quaffing a couple of glasses of ale to nerve himself for harrowing details, requested him to begin at the beginning and go right on.

His nephew complied, the tale which he had told Poppy serving him as far as Riga; after which a slight collision off the Nore at night between the brig which was bringing him home and the *Golden Cloud* enabled him to climb into the bows of that ill-fated vessel before she swung clear again. There was a slight difficulty here, Captain Barber's views of British seamen making no allowance for such a hasty exchange of ships, but as it appeared that Flower was at the time still suffering from the effects of the fever which had seized him at Riga, he waived the objection, and listened in silence to the end of the story.

"Fancy what he must have suffered," said Mrs. Barber, shivering; "and then to turn up safe and sound a twelvemonth afterwards. He ought to make a book of it."

"It's all in a sailorman's dooty," said Captain Barber, shaking his head. "It's wot 'e expects."

His wife rose, and talking the while proceeded to clear the table. The old man closed the door after her, and with a glance at his nephew gave a jerk of the head towards the kitchen.

"Wonderful woman, your aunt," he said, impressively; "but I was one too many for 'er."

Flower stared.

"How?" he inquired, briefly.

"Married 'er," said the old man, chuckling. "You wouldn't believe wot a lot there was arter her. I got 'er afore she knew where she was a'most. If I was to tell you all that there was arter 'er, you'd hardly believe me."

"I daresay," said the other.

"There's good news and bad news," continued Captain Barber, shaking his head and coughing a bit with his pipe. "I've got a bit o' bad for you."

Flower waited.

"'Lizabeth's married," said the old man, slowly; "married that stupid young Gibson. She'll be sorry enough now, I know."

His nephew looked down. "I've heard about it," he said, with an attempt at gloom; "old George told me."

The old man, respecting his grief, smoked on for some time in silence; then he got up and patted him on the shoulder.

"I'm on the look-out for you," he said, kindly; "there's a niece o' your aunt's. I ain't seen her yet; but your aunt praises of her, so she's all right. I'll tell your aunt to ask 'er over. Your aunt ses——"

"'I'M ON THE LOOK-OUT FOR YOU,' HE SAID, KINDLY."

"How many aunts have I got?" demanded Flower, with sudden irritation.

The old man raised his eyebrows and stared at him in offended amazement.

"You're not yourself, Fred," he said, slowly; "your misfortunes 'ave shook you up. You've got one aunt and one uncle what brought you up and did the best for you ever since you was so 'igh."

"So you did," said Flower, heartily. "I didn't mean to speak like that, but I'm tired and worried."

"I see you was," said his uncle, amiably, "but your aunt's a wonderful woman. She's got a business 'ed, and we're doing well. I'm buying another schooner, and you can 'ave her or have the *Foam* back, which you like."

Flower thanked him warmly, and, Mrs. Barber returning, he noticed with some surprise the evident happiness of the couple for whose marriage he was primarily responsible. He had to go over his adventures again and again, Captain Barber causing much inconvenience and delay at supper-time by using the beer-jug to represent the *Golden Cloud* and a dish of hot sausages the unknown craft which sank her. Flower was

uncertain which to admire most: the tactful way in which Mrs. Barber rescued the sausages or the readiness with which his uncle pushed a plate over a fresh stain on the tablecloth.

Supper finished, he sat silently thinking of Poppy, not quite free from the fear that she might have followed him to New Zealand by another boat. The idea made him nervous, and the suspense became unendurable. He took up his cap and strolled out into the stillness of the evening. Seabridge seemed strange to him after his long absence, and, under present conditions, melancholy. There was hardly a soul to be seen, but a murmur of voices came through the open windows of the Thorn, and a clumsy cart jolted and creaked its way up the darkening road.

He stood for some time looking down on the quay and the shadowy shapes of one or two small craft lying in the river. The *Foam* was in her old berth, and a patch of light aft showed that the cabin was occupied. He walked down to her, and, stepping noiselessly aboard, peered through the open skylight at Ben, as he sat putting a fresh patch in a pair of trousers. It struck him that the old man might know something of the events which had led up to Fraser's surprising marriage, and, his curiosity being somewhat keen on the point, he descended to glean particulars.

Ben's favourite subject was the misdeeds of the crew, and the steps which a kind but firm mate had to take to control them, and he left it unwillingly to discuss Fraser's marriage, of which faint rumours had reached his ears. It was evident that he knew nothing of the particulars, and Flower with some carefulness proceeded to put leading questions.

"Did you ever see anything more of those women who used to come down to the ship after a man named Robinson?" he inquired, carelessly.

"They come down one night soon arter you fell overboard," replied the old man. "Very polite they was, and they asked me to go and see 'em any time I liked. I ain't much of a one for seeing people, but I did go one night 'bout two or three months ago, end o' March, I think it was, to a pub wot they 'ave at Chelsea, to see whether they 'ad heard anything of 'im."

"Ah!" interjected the listener.

"They was very short about it," continued Ben, sourly; "the old party got that excited she could 'ardly keep still, but the young lady she said good riddance to bad rubbish, she ses. She hoped as 'ow he'd be punished."

Flower started, and then smiled softly to himself. "Perhaps she's found somebody else," he said.

Ben grunted.

"I shouldn't wonder, she seemed very much took up with a young feller she called Arthur," he said, slowly; "but that was the last I see of 'em; they never even offered me a drink, and though they'd asked me to go down any time I liked, they was barely civil. The young lady didn't seem to me to want Arthur to 'ear about it."

He stitched away resentfully, and his listener, after a fond look round his old quarters, bade him good-night and went ashore again. For a little while he walked up and down the road, pausing once to glance at the bright drawn blind in the Gibsons' window, and then returned home. Captain Barber and his wife were at cribbage, and intent upon the game.

With the morning sun his spirits rose, and after a hurried breakfast he set off for the station and booked to Bittlesea. The little platform was bright with roses, and the air full of the sweetness of an early morning in June. He watched the long line stretching away until it was lost in a bend of the road, and thought out ways and means of obtaining a private interview with the happy bridegroom; a subject which occupied him long after the train had started, as he was benevolently anxious not to mar his friend's happiness by a display of useless grief and temper on the part of the bride.

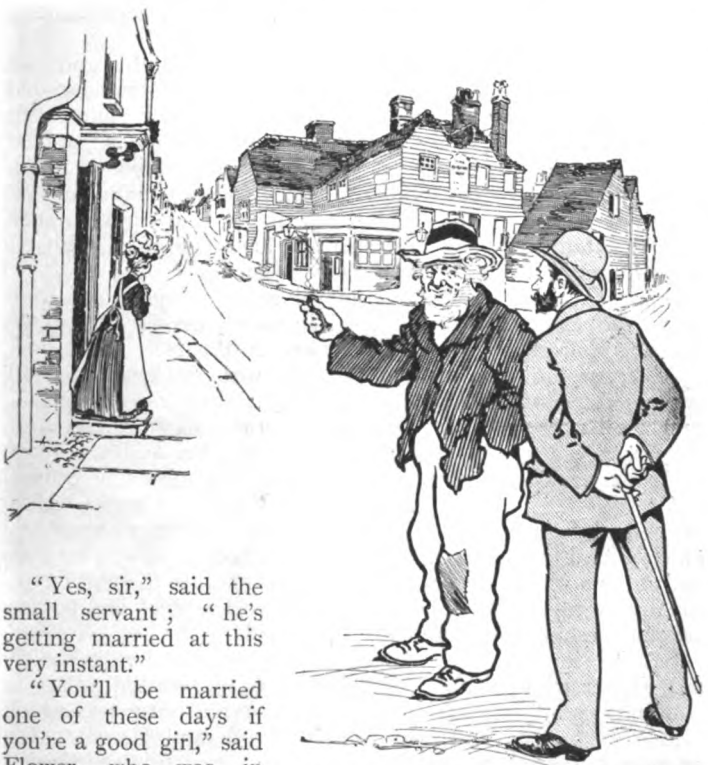
The wedding party left the house shortly before his arrival at the station, after a morning of excitement and suspense which had tried Messrs. Smith and Green to the utmost, both being debarred by self-imposed etiquette from those alluring liquids by which in other circumstances they would have soothed their nerves. They strolled restlessly about with Tommy, for whom they had suddenly conceived an ardent affection, and who, to do him justice, was taking fullest advantage of the fact.

They felt a little safer when a brougham dashed up to the house and carried off Fraser and his supporter, and safer still when his father appeared with Poppy Tyrell on his arm, blushing sweetly and throwing a glance in their direction, which was like to have led to a quarrel until Tommy created a diversion by stating that it was intended for him.

By the time Flower arrived the road was

clear, and the house had lapsed into its accustomed quiet. An old seafaring man, whose interest in weddings had ceased three days after his own, indicated the house with the stem of his pipe. It was an old house with a broad step and a wide-open door, and on the step a small servant, in a huge cap with her hands clasped together, stood gazing excitedly up the road.

"Cap'n Fraser live here?" inquired Flower, after a cautious glance at the windows.



"AN OLD SEAFARING MAN INDICATED THE HOUSE WITH THE STEM OF HIS PIPE."

"Yes, sir," said the small servant; "he's getting married at this very instant."

"You'll be married one of these days if you're a good girl," said Flower, who was in excellent humour.

The small girl forgot her cap and gave her head a toss. Then she regarded him thoughtfully, and after adjusting the cap smoothed down her apron and said she was in no hurry; she never took any notice of them.

Flower looked round and pondered. He was anxious, if possible, to see Fraser and catch the first train back.

"Cap'n Fraser was in good spirits, I suppose?" he said, cautiously.

"Very good spirits," admitted the small servant, "but nervous."

"And Miss Tipping?" suggested Flower.

"Miss who?" inquired the small girl, with a superior smile. "Miss Tyrell you mean, don't you?"

Flower stared at her in astonishment. "No, Miss Tipping," he said, sharply, "the bride. Is Miss Tyrell here too?"

The small girl was astonished in her turn. "Miss Tyrell is the bride," she said, dwelling fondly on the last word. "Who's Miss Tipping?"

"What's the bride's Christian name?" demanded Flower, catching her fiercely by the hand.

He was certain of the reply before the now thoroughly frightened small girl could find breath enough to utter it, and at the word "Poppy," he turned without a word and ran up the road. Then he stopped, and coming back hastily, called out to her for the whereabouts of the church.

"Straight up there and second turning on the left," cried the small girl, her fear giving place to curiosity. "What's the matter?"

But Flower was running doggedly up the road, thinking in a confused fashion as he ran. At first he thought that Joe had blundered; then, as he remembered his manner and his apparent haste to get rid of him, amazement and anger jostled each other in his mind. Out of breath, his pace slackened to a walk, and then broke into a run again as he turned the corner and the church came into view.

There was a small cluster of people in the porch, which was at once reduced by two enterprising seamen, and a couple of carriages drawn up against the curb. He arrived breathless and peered in. A few spectators were in the seats, but the chancel was empty.

"They're gone into the vestry," whispered an aged but frivolous woman, who was grimly waiting with a huge bag of rice.

Flower turned white. No efforts of his could avail now, and he smiled bitterly as he thought of his hardships of the past year.

There was a lump in his throat, and a sense of unreality about the proceedings which was almost dream-like. He looked up the sunny road, with its sleepy, old-time houses, and then at the group standing in the porch, wondering dimly that a deformed girl on crutches should be smiling as gaily as though the wedding were her own, and that yellow, wrinkled old women should wilfully come to remind themselves of their long-dead youth. His whole world seemed suddenly desolate and unreal, and it was only borne in upon him slowly that there was no need now for his journey to London in search of Poppy, and that henceforth her movements could possess no interest for him. He ranged himself quietly with the bystanders and, not without a certain dignity, waited.

"THEY REGARDED EACH OTHER WITHOUT A WORD."

It seemed a long time. The horses champed their bits and rattled their harness. The bystanders got restless. Then there was a movement.

He looked in the church again and saw them coming down the aisle: Fraser, smiling and erect, with Poppy's little hand upon his arm. She looked down at first, smiling shyly, but as they drew near the door gave her husband a glance such as Flower had never seen before. He caught his breath then, and stood up erect as the bridegroom himself, and as they reached the door they both saw him at the same instant. Poppy, with a startled cry of joy and surprise, half drew her arm from her husband's; Fraser gazed at him as on one risen from the dead.

For a space they regarded each other without a word, then Fraser, with his wife on his arm, took a step towards him. Flower, still regarding them steadily, drew back a little, and moved by a sudden impulse, and that new sense of dignity, snatched a handful of rice from the old woman's bag and threw it over them.

Then he turned quickly, and with rapid strides made his way back to the station.

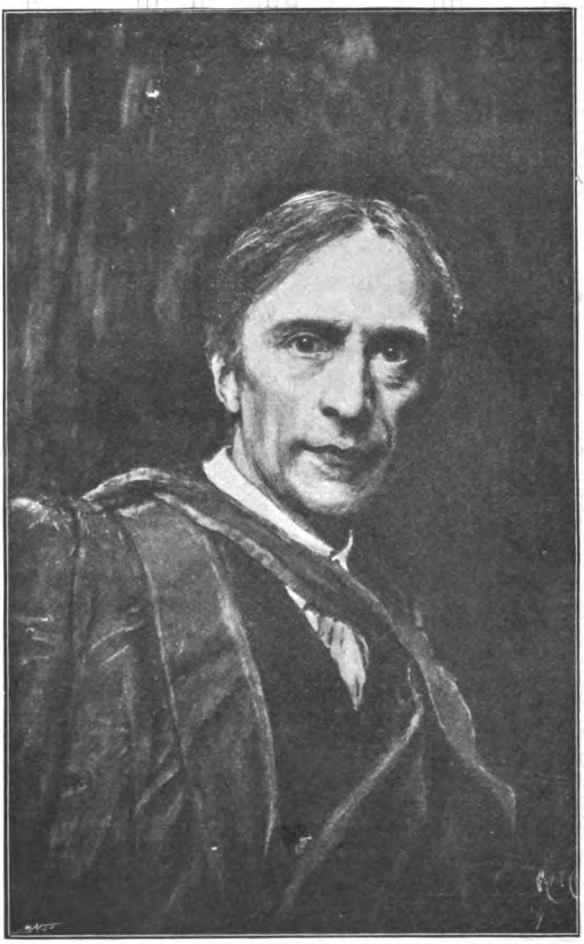
THE END.

Illustrated Interviews.

LXX.—HUBERT HERKOMER, R.A.

By Frederick Dolman.

WHEN Professor Herkomer painted the prettiest bit of Bushey, in Hertfordshire, for the Royal Academy of 1890, and called it "Our Village," the title had about as full a meaning as could be given to the words. It was in a far country from Hertfordshire, indeed, that Hubert Herkomer first saw the light; but even his birthplace—the Bavarian village of Waal, near Landsberg—has scarcely so strong and enduring an association with his fame as this little community on the north-western outskirts of London. A resident of Bushey for some twenty-five years, Professor Herkomer has done two things there which probably for generations to come will link its name with his own. He has established there a school of art of which it may be said that several pupils will probably achieve the highest distinction. He has built for himself, in the midst of this settlement of studious and aspiring youth, a dwelling-house such as may defy the ravages of centuries, whose interior is a liberal education in the decorative arts and crafts.



HUBERT HERKOMER, R.A.
From the Enamel by Himself.

To Professor Herkomer's friends and admirers a walk through Bushey always has, therefore, a keen interest in relation to his work and personality. On the high-road from station to house you may pass the men and women who have figured, not merely in "Our Village," but in such pictures as "Hard Times" and "The Foster Mother." The picturesque view embodied in "Our Village" will always detain you for a few moments as you identify its several features—the old church partly hidden by a tall oak tree; the inevitable inn, quaint and venerable; and the pleasant-looking cottages grouped around. Just about here Bushey is still rustic, without a suggestion of the London whose irresistible advance must ultimately overwhelm it. In other directions Bushey has of recent years surrendered much to the builder, to whose work Professor Herkomer has himself given stimulus as a necessary effect from the prosperity of the art school, whose well-lighted studios are passed just as you turn down the side road which gives access to "Lululaund."

From the Picture by H. Herkomer, R.A.] "OUR VILLAGE." *[By permission of Mr. Mansel Lewis.*

With either old cottages or new villas Professor Herkomer's house presents an exceedingly striking contrast, which loses little of its force as a second or third visit renders it more familiar. "Lululaund"—the name was a compliment to the artist's wife, Lulu, at the time the house was designed—is a mediæval castle, with faultless masonry and an excellent adaptation to modern needs. Un-English as it is in aspect, its architecture might well suggest Munich and Nuremberg with the boyish memories these old German cities have for Professor Herkomer. In its strength and solidity, however, it is fitted to vie with Chatsworth or Hatfield as an ancestral home, and the artist, in his conversation on the subject, shows that it is with some of our English pride of family, as well as of enthusiasm for art, that he has lavished so much care and money on his house.

It was more than three years since I had seen Professor Herkomer, but on coming into the reception-hall he at once recognised an old acquaintance in the representative of THE STRAND MAGAZINE—he has, of course, the portrait-painter's memory for faces. The words of protest against "interviews" and "interviewers" die upon his lips as he promptly helps me off with my coat, and in a few moments I am most comfortably installed in the studio.

Neither the painter nor his studio have changed much, I find, since my last visit to Lululaund for one of those Sunday afternoon receptions which are the delight of the students and their friends. Professor Herkomer, who is on the verge of fifty, has iron-grey hair, and on the rather drawn, closely-shaven face, which so well befits his tall, agile frame, there are some sharp lines and curves. But these, as I know, are the only evidence of deep sorrow in other years. The high forehead has the firmness and smoothness of youth, and as Professor Herkomer talks there is a quick play of energy about his features.

The studio as a whole is bare in aspect compared with artists' studios generally, with lofty walls and broad ceiling. There is no display of finished work by the painter and his friends—this is to be seen in the picture gallery of Lululaund. There is not the usual litter of drawings and "studies"—these are neatly packed away in spacious cabinets. So placed as to catch the best of

the afternoon light is a portrait of the Duke of Connaught; in a far corner is a large pencil design of some kind, and on an easel by my side is a large cartoon in vivid colours, the purpose of which rather puzzles me until Professor Herkomer enlightens me.

"You know, of course, that I have taken up enamel-painting—you saw my shield, 'The Triumph of the Hour,' in last year's Academy. Well, this is the design for my next most important work in enamel. You see it there complete in composition and colouring, but it may be years before the picture is finished. My shield took two years from beginning to end, doing it, of course, with a great deal of other work."

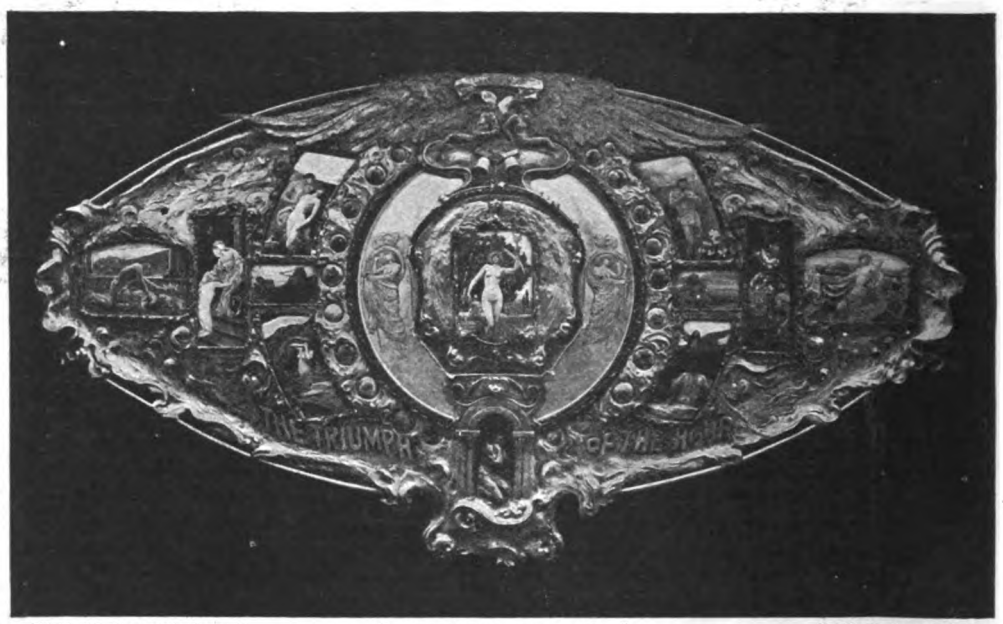
I looked more closely at the design. A number of youths and maidens are disporting themselves round a grim figure of Death, hurling flowers at him as they dance, several smaller allegorical ideas being introduced around this central theme.

"What a striking idea!" I exclaim. "Did you come across it in reading somewhere?"

"No, I've never had a picture suggested by books. Such as it is, the idea comes from here," and the painter humorously tapped his head. "For a long time I've had a fancy for allegory—because a man has painted some successful portraits and genre pictures is no reason why he should not have his dreams sometimes. But I was never quite satisfied with oils for this kind of work—my oil-painting somehow never seemed to me to express all that an allegory should express. At last I hit upon enamel, with which decorators are, of course, familiar enough, but which hitherto has not received from artists the attention that I am now convinced it deserves."

"How did you make this discovery?"

"On a visit to Birmingham, about three years ago, when I went to the Municipal Art School to see my old friend Taylor, the Principal, who was one of my fellow-students at South Kensington. Enamel is used a good deal in one or two of the Birmingham manufactures, and so a good deal of time is given to the subject."



Shield with Pictures in Enamel] "THE TRIUMPH OF THE HOUR." *[by H. Herkomer, R.A.*

"Well, Professor Herkomer, but what *is* enamel-painting?" I inquired, thinking a frank confession of ignorance the best in the circumstances.

By way of reply, Professor Herkomer took me into an adjoining room and showed me a number of small bottles filled with what appeared to be finely-ground glass of various colours. These powders, crushed by hand from solid pieces of enamel, are the pigments with which the painter works. On the other side of this room a furnace has been fitted up wherein the plates are fired under Professor Herkomer's direction. Without attempting to understand the whole technical

process, it is obvious that painting in enamel is a much more troublesome and expensive undertaking than painting in oils.

"On the other hand," I am reminded, "you can obtain a greater brilliancy of colouring with enamel than is possible with oil, and you paint your picture practically for all time. Atmosphere will not affect it; only fire, I believe, can destroy it. There are some enamels painted three or four centuries ago which to-day are absolutely perfect.

"But, of course, I do not suggest that a young painter should begin with enamel—he must first attain to some proficiency in oils and water colours. At the same time, it is desirable that the attention of art students should be directed to the subject. As you know, I gave up my Slade Professorship at Oxford three or four years ago—the work was getting too much for me—but I have undertaken the lecture-ship on Painting at the Royal Academy Schools, and I am introducing the subject there. My Bushey students have been greatly interested in the matter from the first."

"Is enamel suitable for portraits?"

"Not for portraits in the everyday dress of to-day. There must be some very bright colours in the picture. I am just now painting the Bishop of London, and the colours in his ecclesiastical vestments lend themselves to very effective treatment with enamel." Professor Herkomer would have shown me the portrait, but it was at his London studio in Ebury Street, where he works two or three days a week in bright weather for the convenience of some of the exceedingly busy men who sit to him.

"Some people," Professor Herkomer continued, "seem to imagine that I take up so many things, subject-pictures and portraits, engraving and etching, art-teaching, music and musical composition, acting and stage-craft, and now enamel-painting, simply for the sake of *éclat*. I can assure you that *éclat* has had nothing to do with it. I like appreciation, of course—an artist can hardly work without it—but this variety in my efforts has been simply the outcome of a passion for work. For pleasure in the ordinary sense of the word I care very little. My pleasure is mostly a change of occupation. When I am tired of painting I may turn to music, and from music to reading, and so on."

"But you have some physical recreation?"

"Yes, I am fond of cycling, and I rather like the game of croquet as it has lately been revised. For winter evenings I have devised a table on which one can play croquet indoors. I regret that I never learned billiards, but I am afraid I am too old to begin now. For the rest my life here is such as I wished and prepared for—every hour of the day is agreeably occupied in one way or another, according to a definite programme. At the same time, I am able to have my work facilitated in every possible way. Everything is ready for me—I do not even set my own palette."

From the Picture by] "THE MAKERS OF MY HOUSE." *[H. Herkomer, R.A.*

"I suppose your distance from town saves you from a good deal of distraction?"

"Yes, I could never live as I do in Kensington or St. John's Wood. I am always very glad to see my friends here on Sunday, but promiscuous callers every day during the week would run away with no end of time. I go to theatres occasionally—to *matinées*—and should like to go more often; but for most of the pleasures of the London season I never cared. You see, I come of a family of workers—for generations my forefathers were peasants and craftsmen. With all the education and knowledge my

life has given me I remain at heart a peasant still."

As Professor Herkomer used these striking words I looked over to the other side of the studio, where there was a large panel framing three pictures of craftsmen in their working clothes. They are Professor Herkomer's portraits of his father and uncles, who, being installed by him at Bushey, had assisted in the building of Lululaund.

"There is no doubt that this hereditary influence counts for much. The other day a lady was sitting to me for her portrait, and as I painted I put my view of life. 'But,' she objected, 'some of us really can't work. Our ancestors for generations have done nothing but play. And as we have to get through our lives somehow, so we must play too.' I thought she put the matter from her point of view very well."

Professor Herkomer cannot speak of his father and mother without suggesting the reverent love he bore them. "It has been my religion," he declares. For one thing, never did parents more keenly sympathize with a son's ambition. As a boy Hubert Herkomer showed talent for both music and art—whilst the mother favoured the former as her son's vocation, the father strongly preferred the latter. The worldly circumstances of the family did not render it likely that the boy would be able to qualify himself for either. When he was only two years old his parents had resolved to escape from the social distress in which Bavaria was plunged, after the failure of the revolutionary movement of 1848, by emigration to the United States. But America proved to them a land of broken promises. They recrossed the Atlantic in 1857, and arrived at Southampton as poor as when they had left their native village six years before. Their port of arrival became their home, a small and precarious income being obtained in Southampton by his father's irregular employment as a joiner and carver, and his mother giving lessons in music. For a long time their joint earnings did not average more than 30s. a week. In these circumstances it is not surprising that practical people strongly advised them to put their son to some trade or business, instead of encouraging his artistic ambition.

"Some friends pressed my parents to let me enter the Ordnance Survey office in the town, where I would be sure to rise soon, and where my future would be secured, as pensions always followed after thirty or forty years' service. Thirty or forty years! It would be a comfort to think of, and would relieve my parents, once for all, of anxieties for my future. Thus argued our friends. But my father's answer was short and almost fierce. 'No,' he said, 'my son shall be a free artist, and not a slave.'"

Having taken this resolution, the father did everything in his power, by his own effort and self-denial, to enable his son to obtain the necessary training. As a beginning, Hubert, when thirteen years old, was sent to the Southampton Art School in connection with South Kensington, which he attended three times a week.

"It was a great excitement," says Professor Herkomer, "though not unmixed with disappointment, for I was set to copy those stupid outlines of casts, and the master was a man whose sole remark by way of criticism seemed to be, 'Yes, that's all looking very nice.' He was one of the first batch of masters sent out by the Science and Art Department, and was indeed a poor creature."

Professor Herkomer tells many an anecdote of his early struggles in illustration of his father's splendid character. When he was about seventeen his father was fortunate enough to obtain a commission for some wood-carving from models at Munich. He took his son with him in order that he might attend the Munich Art Schools, but even there the lad was only allowed to draw from casts.

"I longed to draw from the human figure," says Professor Herkomer, "and it was my good father who first sat to me for such study. We rose at six o'clock every morning, we then washed in cold water all over, and whilst I dressed my father made the fire in the stove and put the water on to boil. During that time my father remainded undressed, and in the intervals of his domestic work posed for me. When the water boiled it was time to lay aside the sketch, but to be renewed the next morning."

A year or so later in Southampton this kindest of fathers became Herkomer's model in his first drawings for the Press. A new comic paper was started in London, and, on the recommendation of a journalistic friend, Herkomer was engaged to supply a weekly cartoon for £2 apiece. "I did cartoons," he recalls, "for 'Death and Folly Feeding War,' 'Bradlaugh Besmearing a Figure of Truth,' and several connected with the fall of Queen Isabella of Spain. As my father sat for the Pope, for Nemesis, for Bradlaugh, in fact, for all the figures, the editor complained that my figures looked 'too German.'"

With this engagement Herkomer thought his fortune was made. But the paper stopped after six weeks, and his efforts to obtain similar work in other directions had little success. He had already spent a few months in London attending the South Kensington schools, and to London he returned in order that he might be in personal touch with the publishers. Living and working in a small Chelsea lodging, Herkomer, as he bluntly states, had a hard time of it for a year or two. Once his want of money obliged him to seek employment as a zither player with some Christy Minstrels. This appointment he did not obtain for a time, and meanwhile he was actually occupied in stencilling work in the South Kensington Museum at ninepence an hour.

"Did you never lose heart all this time?"

"No; I suppose I had such a fanatical belief in myself. I worked on in spite of such sordid troubles, just as in later years I never allowed domestic sorrow to disturb my daily task."

From the Picture by] "THE LAST MUSTER." [*H. Herkomer, R.A.*
By permission of Messrs. Jean Boussod, Manzi, Joyant & Co., owners of the Copyright.

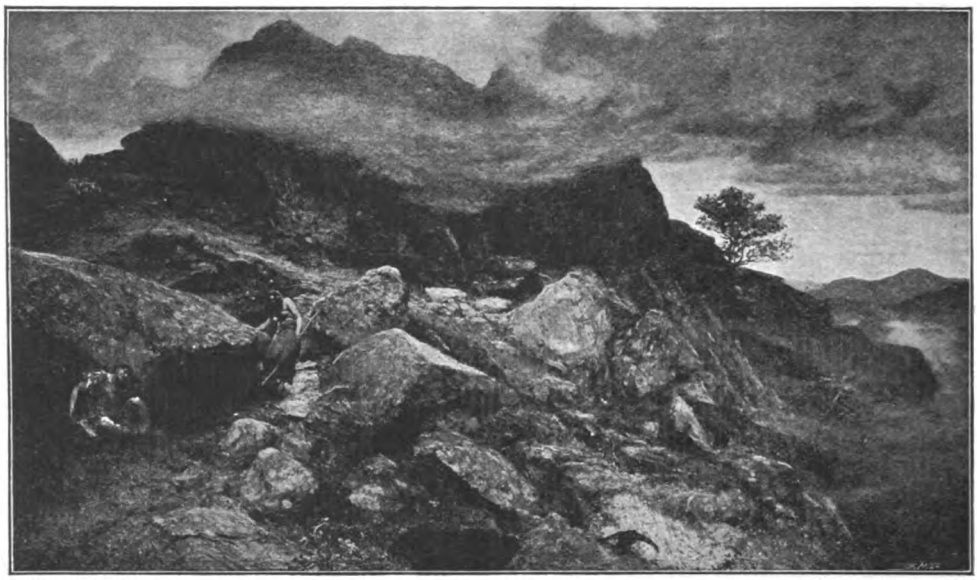
With the starting of the *Graphic* in 1869 the young artist's difficulties came to an end. "From that time," says Professor Herkomer, "I never wanted work."

It was as a full-page drawing for the *Graphic*, entitled "Chelsea Pensioners in Church," that his masterpiece, "The Last Muster," was first conceived. It attracted some attention in the newspapers, and at the request of the proprietor, Mr. W. L. Thomas, Herkomer did a water-colour of the same subject. He then undertook the big picture in oils contrary to the advice of all his friends, who considered that the red-coats could not be managed on a large scale. It was painted against time, Professor Herkomer tells me, during the winter of 1874 in readiness for the Academy of that year.

"Never, probably, was so important a picture worked out in such a way. No design was made of the groups and no measurement taken of the architectural perspective. On the raw canvas I sketched the central dying figure and the big man on the seat in front of him. I merely guessed at the probable correct sizes and distances between the figures. Then came the figure next to the dying man, the one that looks into his face, alarmed, and touches his arm to see what the matter is. Then the figure next to the bald-headed man in the front seat, and so on. I always had two men together to see how one face came against the other.

"I could not work at the picture in the chapel itself; therefore, how to manage from sketches, and to sketch the oblique perspective correctly, without one jot of knowledge of perspective, was not easy. I sat in the chapel and looked at the background until I was sure of the direction of its lines. Strange to say, my eye did not mislead me, and every man in the picture, front and back, found his correct place in the composition."

"The Last Muster" was *the* picture of the year 1873, and at the age of twenty-five Herkomer had made his career. The members of the Hanging Committee at the Royal Academy clapped their hands when the picture was brought before them, and



From the Picture by] "FOUND." *[H. Herkomer, R.A.*

Now in the National Gallery of British Art, Millbank.

Leighton and Richmond both wrote letters of congratulation to the young artist. The picture was sold for £1,200.

A work which has some resemblance to "The Last Muster"—"The Chapel of the Charterhouse"—was purchased by the Chantrey Trustees and now hangs in the Tate Gallery, where Professor Herkomer is also represented by the picture "Found," which is reproduced on this page. The canvas depicts the discovery of a wounded Roman soldier by a British goatherd, a half-savage woman, who has, nevertheless, some feeling of pity, the episode serving to set forth a fine piece of wild Welsh scenery.

"The Guards' Cheer," a more recent work, may, in its way, become almost as memorable as "The Last Muster." Professor Herkomer saw the Royal procession on Jubilee Day, 1897, from the windows of the Athenæum Club, and his attention was caught by a group of guardsmen, with a child in their midst, who stood by the Crimean Statue and vociferously cheered as the Queen passed by. The incident became the subject of the artist's brush, all the models being guardsmen who had served in the Crimea.

The "Chelsea Pensioners" suggested a rare skill in portraiture, and about this time he was favoured with sittings by Wagner, Ruskin, and Tennyson. But it was some years before Herkomer gained general recognition as a portrait-painter. His first commission, he tells me, was in 1879, when King's College, Cambridge, asked him to paint a portrait of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

"For some years," Professor Herkomer remarks, "portrait-painting has, of course, been my principal source of income. But it is not the easy means of making money which some people are apt to imagine. So much depends upon your sitter. The least distinguished people are not always the easiest to paint. I was painting the portrait of a certain lady, whose name you wouldn't know, last summer, and somehow or other I couldn't get the features right. Ultimately I had to leave for my two months' holiday in Germany with the portrait still unfinished—a haunting burden on my mind during the whole time.

"You mentioned Mr. Cecil Rhodes just now. Mr. Rhodes was one of the best sitters I ever had, full of the ease and *bonhomie* that so lighten the portrait-painter's task." This testimony from Professor Herkomer, I may add, was the more remarkable considering Mr. Rhodes's restless temperament.

Of all Professor Herkomer's portraits, that of the beautiful "Miss Grant," exhibited in the Academy of 1885, is certainly the most celebrated. It was the portrait of a friend's daughter, but for some time the identity of "the White Lady" was the subject of speculation.

"Endless verses," says Professor Her-

komer, "were sent me to send on to her; stories and fabricated biographies were written about her by the dozen. I heard the picture mentioned at hotels, and even in the trains on the Continent. At Berlin the only chairs in the Exhibition were placed in front of this picture—it was Miss Grant, Miss Grant, Miss Grant. Many offers of purchase were made to me—two, strangely enough, from gentlemen whose daughters were supposed to be the image of my Miss Grant. But I painted it for myself, and it was not for sale."

From the Picture by] "THE GUARDS' CHEER." *[H. Herkomer, R.A.*

By permission of the Fine Art Society, owners of the Copyright.

Mrs. Herkomer comes into the studio to summon us to afternoon tea. This is served at a table in the good old English style, the Herkomers' youngest child, a winsome little girl, being present at the meal. The artist's eldest son, Siegfrid, who was married last year, has made his home—patriarchal fashion—in some of the upper apartments of the spacious Lululaund, whilst a married daughter lives at Watford. A little son of ten is away at school. An artist cousin of the same name as himself is settled in London.

After tea I renew acquaintance with other parts of Professor Herkomer's house. I notice the progress which has been made with the decoration of the dining-room, of which the main feature illustrates "Human Sympathy." Round the walls, moulded in relief and richly painted, is a series of characteristic human figures whose hands are joined together in an unbroken clasp. I admire anew the lovely frescoes in the studio, "Liberty" and "Love," and the music gallery wherein a full orchestra can be seated. As befitting the purpose of this room, a sun-blind against one of the windows has had inscribed upon it the following lines:—

> Dancing is a form of rhythm,
> Rhythm is a form of music,
> Music is a form of thought,
> And thought is a form of divinity.

In these, as in nearly all the other rooms of Lululaund, the fine wood-carving, made chiefly by the artist's father and uncle, is the most noteworthy feature. The bookcases, for instance, instead of being open in front or protected by glass, have wooden sliding-doors, and instead of various coloured bindings you see rich carvings. Every piece of furniture has been separately designed and fabricated in Professor Herkomer's workshops.

We return to the studio for a smoke, my host (who had only just renounced the anti-tobacco faith) contenting himself with cigarettes, whilst offering me a cigar. On the table, as we smoked, I noticed a portfolio of manuscript music.

"It contains some of my compositions for the zither. I have always been very fond of this instrument, as well as the violin, and I have now enough of these compositions to form a volume, which is shortly to be published in Munich. The zither is little known in this country, but it is played a great deal in Germany."

Painted by] PORTRAIT OF MISS GRANT ("THE LADY IN WHITE"). *[H. Herkomer, R.A.*

By permission of Messrs. Obach & Co., Cockspur Street, owners of the Copyright.

"I suppose there is no prospect of another music-play from your pen, Professor Herkomer?"

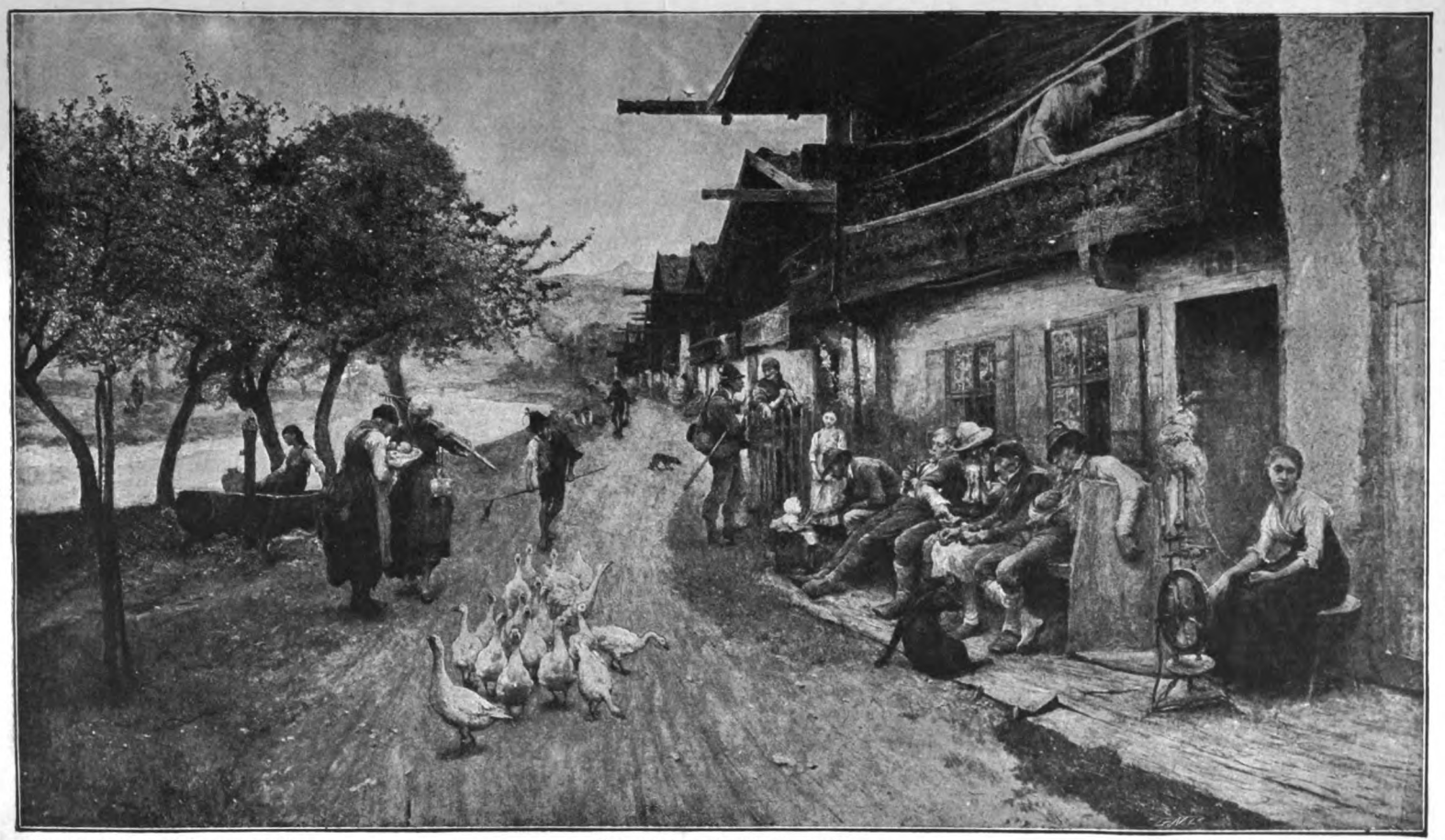
"No; I am afraid the mood for dramatic composition and production has passed, although I derived much pleasure from my work in that way and the appreciation which it received from my friends. My theatre here is now only used for concerts, in which the students, past and present, take the principal parts."

"Many of your students settle here permanently after their school work is over?"

"Yes, and I am very glad that it is so. You see, our relations are not the ordinary relations of master and pupils. In the first place, as you know, I take no fee for my tuition, the school being in the hands of a small limited company. The student who seeks admission must first satisfy me by a finished work of some kind of skill in the use of the pencil. My own teaching is directed to the correction of tendencies whilst giving free scope to the individuality of each student. Thus, although I have a school, it has been truly said by critics that I shall have no imitators.

"You know of my Sunday receptions. Well, I have lately supplemented these by two evening receptions during the week. The men come one evening, the women another, and over a cup of coffee we talk about our difficulties and ambitions."

The Herkomer School has usually about eighty students, the majority being of the fair sex. "I have had students," he told me, "from all parts of England and from various parts of the world—Americans and



From the Picture by H. Herkomer, R.A.] "AFTER THE TOIL OF THE DAY." [*By permission of Mr. Mansel Lewis.*

Australians, Japs, and even an Indian Prince. One of the most striking things is the increasing proportion of ladies, which it is difficult to fully account for. I often do my best to discourage them from entering upon art as a career, but it is not of much use."

Professor Herkomer's private secretary enters the studio to consult him as to a telegraphic appointment with a "sitter," which had apparently been overlooked. The incident was suggestive of the pressing calls to which Professor Herkomer is subject as a portrait-painter. They come not alone from English people. He has twice visited the United States, and in the country of his birth his fame is as great as in that of his adoption.

"So many requests have come from my German friends," he tells me, "that I have at last decided to spend a month or two in Berlin, taking a studio and devoting myself during that time to portrait-painting. My visit will coincide with the holding of an exhibition in Berlin, at which there is to be a representative collection of my works, both subject-pictures and portraits, in oils and water-colour as well as in enamel. I am a citizen, you know, of both England and Germany."

"But how can that be?"

"Well, at the outset I became a naturalized British subject. But I became a German subject again in 1888, in order that my marriage with my present wife might be legal, which, of course, it was not, according to that stupid law about a deceased wife's sister peculiar to England. My wedding, you know, took place in Germany—in the tower at Landsberg, in fact, which I erected to my mother's memory. Naturally, I supposed that I had thereby lost my English citizenship. But on consulting an eminent Q.C. I was very pleased to find that this was not so, and I obtained a special certificate of naturalization. So, you see, I am an Englishman in England and a German in Germany."

Let me add, however, that Professor Herkomer's English, in its fluency and purity, is as to the manner born, albeit he occasionally introduces into his conversation illustrative German phrases. It is as an English artist that honours have been conferred upon him by several European countries; and although he has found many subjects in his native Bavaria, such as "After the Toil of the Day," which was his first contribution to the Royal Academy, his most successful pictures have undoubtedly been of English scenes and English people.

"Will you have my carriage to the station?" Professor Herkomer inquires as I rise to go. But I decline his courteous offer, for it is but a mile's walk along a moonlit road, through crisp, country air which helps to explain the exuberant energy that, on reflection, is the most abiding impression I carry away from Lululaund concerning its master-builder.

THE STORY OF A LOST GUN.

By Victor L. Whitechurch.

IT was, at the most, an affair of outposts, but Colonel Baxter was anxious to make the thing successful, although the force under his command was scarcely a thousand, all told, including four guns. For some days the Boers had been retreating northward and had crossed the Zandgolo River, entrenching themselves upon the farther side, after having destroyed the railway bridge over the river. The Colonel's little force had followed closely, and was encamped to the south of Vredeburg, slightly over a mile and a half from this same bridge. Although he hardly had hopes of dislodging the enemy before the arrival of reinforcements, he was determined to push forward as far as possible, and at least worry them if he could do no more. For this purpose a reconnaissance with a hastily-prepared armoured train was ordered.

Now, Major Finch did not believe in armoured trains, and he was the more inclined to grumble on this occasion because one of the precious four guns had been "commandeered" to go to the front on a coal-truck protected with bits of boiler-plate. As an artillery officer he mistrusted the whole arrangement, and made no secret of it; but the Colonel only scoffed at his scruples, and so he had to watch Lieutenant Sangate and a dozen men climb into the truck and disappear behind "that rickety tin armour," as he called it.

There was not much time for growling, however, for the worthy Major had to take up a position with the remaining guns on the summit of a kopje that commanded the railway line as far as and beyond the river. It was the duty of these guns to protect the advance of the armoured train.

"It's a fool's game," muttered the Major to himself as he swept the veldt with his field-glasses, till his eyes rested on a ridge of hills some three miles from where he was standing, and about a mile and a half beyond the river. "They've got guns there, to a

dead certainty, guns that we can't touch; and as soon as that rotten little, tinkered-up fad of Baxter's gets within range she'll draw their fire. It'll be sheer luck if they get out of it, too. If he wanted to send 'em a target why couldn't he have run out a dummy, and not chanced losing my precious barker? Halloa, they're off!"

For as he glanced at the line just below him there came some spurts of steam from the engine as it slowly moved forward on its dangerous errand. Besides the locomotive there were only two trucks, one in front with the gun, and the other behind, containing a Maxim and a score of Tommies. The Major watched the train as it wound its way round the bases of the low hills until it reached Vredeburg "Station," an apology consisting of a platform, a couple of sheds, a few sidings, and a signal-box, the latter being on the other side of the station.

From this point the line ran perfectly straight and on a dead level with the veldt as far as the river, which was distant about a quarter of a mile from the station. It was the object of the reconnaissance to discover how far the bridge had been damaged, and, by drawing the enemy's fire, to unmask his position.

"Now the game will begin," muttered the Major, as he turned his glasses once more towards the distant kopjes.

He was right. A puff of white smoke came from the summit of one of them, and a few seconds later there was another smaller puff a couple of hundred yards in front of the advancing train. Another and another followed, and shells began to drop thick and fast about the little fort on wheels. Then there came a spurt of fire from the leading truck. The enemy's compliment was being returned.

Slowly the train ran on. Half the distance between Vredeburg Station and the river was traversed when, suddenly, another sound arose distinct from the boom of the guns. It was the rattle of Mausers.

"There they are!" cried the Major, "on the other side of the river. Let 'em have it—a little under 3,000yds!"

The three guns opened fire, and the range was speedily found. Shrapnel began to drop unpleasantly close to the Boer riflemen the other side of the river, who still, however, kept up a withering fire on the approaching train. The latter had now arrived within a hundred yards of the river, when suddenly the Major saw three of the enemy's shells, aimed with splendid precision, fall almost simultaneously apparently right into the train immediately in front of the engine and burst, with clouds of smoke. This was followed by a perfect hail of shells dropping in rapid succession all round and upon the devoted train, supported by a terrific rifle fire from the Boer infantry at a range of little more than 300yds.

"Why don't she come out of it?" muttered Major Finch. "It's madness trying to stick there." For the train had stopped dead, and the one solitary gun was doing its little best. The enemy had not, at all events, succeeded in silencing it.

"Good," went on the Major, as puffs of steam once more rose from the engine's smoke-stack; "she's coming back—what!—Great heavens, they've left my gun behind!"

For as the train steamed quickly back into Vredeburg it was evident that she was coming away without the front truck, which still remained on the line within a hundred yards of the river, the plucky gunners working their solitary gun for all they were worth.

The enemy's shells had burst between the engine and the truck, completely shattering the couplings. Two men lying dead across the track showed that an attempt to recouple the truck had been in vain, and under the fearful fire the engine had been compelled to retreat. She left her other truck on the British side of Vredeburg Station, and twice attempted a dash to the front, supported by Finch's three guns. But it was no use. The Boer artillery had got the range so perfectly that the engine could not possibly have run within a couple of hundred yards of the gun-truck without being smashed; in fact, she could scarcely show her buffers outside Vredeburg Station.

Then the Major had to watch a gruesome thing through his glasses. The last spurt of fire came from his beloved gun, and the next moment Lieutenant Sangate and his men swarmed over the side of the truck and started running back for dear life. First one bit the dust with a Mauser bullet through the brain, then another stumbled, and a comrade caught him in his arms and hurried on. Then the Lieutenant began to limp on his left leg and had to be supported, and finally eight men reached Vredeburg Station, five of them wounded, leaving three motionless in the truck, beside the abandoned gun, and two more lying by the side of the line.

So the gun was lost, and Major Finch's reflections on the subject of armoured trains had better not be reported.

But the gun, though lost, was not in the hands of the enemy. Before they could actually take it they would have to cross the river, and very soon the sharp eye of Major Finch detected a movement of this nature

As the Major anticipated, when it was dark both sides began to play on the abandoned gun with their search-lights, and it soon became evident that a night attack to rescue it was out of the question.

"THEN ANOTHER STUMBLED, AND A COMRADE CAUGHT HIM."

some quarter of a mile up stream, where apparently there was a drift. But half-a-dozen well-aimed shells from his battery soon put an end to this little game, and they had to beat a retreat.

"Umph," growled the Major, "I suppose we'll try and bring it in after sundown. But if the beggars have search-lights it won't be much use. Fortunately, we've got ours, and the Colonel is sure to fix it up so that they won't be able to show themselves anywhere within range of our little beauties here. By George, I wish we could get that gun back!"

Lifting his glasses once more he gazed long and earnestly at the abandoned truck and its surroundings. As he did so a curious expression stole over his face.

"She's pulled up close to that distant signal," he murmured; "and that signal's worked from the station. Well, it's a tough job, but it might be done, I should think. It's worth trying, too."

The Colonel was very gloomy at the rough-and-tumble mess that evening.

"Well, gentlemen," he said to the officers present, "it's been an unlucky day. But we must get that gun back somehow, even if we have to pay heavily for doing so."

"We've paid pretty heavily for sending it there," growled the Major.

The Colonel bit his lip. Then he began discussing a plan of operations. It was his custom to consult the senior officers individually on such occasions, and presently he turned to the Major and said:—

"Well, Finch, what is your opinion?"

"It's a risky plan, sir, that's what I think. I don't see the use of employing the handful of cavalry we've got over this business, and I'm sorry to say I don't agree with you."

"Perhaps you've got a better suggestion?" retorted the Colonel, who was beginning to get angry.

"Well," drawled Finch, who had the

reputation of being annoyingly cool in discussions when other men lost their tempers, "I think your plan risks too many men."

"And how many do you think would be enough, pray?"

"Um; well, I should say *one* man might tackle the job, and——"

"*One man!*" cried the Colonel. "I don't know whether you're joking, sir, but if you are, all I can say is that it's most ill-timed."

"On the contrary, sir, I meant exactly what I said."

"Then perhaps you'll go and get your precious gun yourself!"

The Colonel had completely lost his temper. The little group of officers started in pained surprise as the Major sprang to his feet.

"Thank you, sir," he exclaimed, quietly, "I will obey your orders. All I stipulate is that you keep that engine in steam till you hear from me. Good-night, all!"

And, to the astonishment of all present, he turned on his heel and walked out of the tent, without another word.

If his brother officers could have followed him they would have been somewhat surprised at his movements. His first action was to divest himself of his sword and to glance at his watch.

"About four hours of darkness left," he said to himself. "Well, I shall want them all." Then he made his way to an armourer's tent and demanded a couple of screw-drivers, a file, and a pair of wire-nippers. Armed with these singular weapons he started along the line in the direction of Vredeburg. Just before he came to the station he was challenged by a couple of vedettes, who allowed him to proceed on giving the password. He paced through the empty station until he was just past the signal-box at the farther end. Then he threw himself motionless on the ground as a blinding flash of light came streaming over the spot.

"They'll scarcely pick out one man in khaki," he muttered, when the light had shifted.

Crawling on his hands and knees to the side of the line, he uttered an exclamation of joy as he found what he had come to seek, the signal wire by which the distant signal near the gun was manipulated from the box. It was carried along the side of the line on small posts about a foot high, and some fifteen yards apart, running over a grooved wheel screwed to the top of each of these posts.

"It's a good thick one," he remarked, as he felt the wire, which was composed of several twisted strands, "and ought to stand a jolly good strain. If it doesn't! But, there, we won't think of 'ifs'; we'll get to work."

First of all he cut the wire through with his file and pliers, then he started crawling along the line, keeping absolutely still every time the light came flashing upon him, until he had passed some five of the little posts. Taking hold of the wire, he commenced to pull it towards him from the direction from which he had come. He thus cleared some seventy yards of wire, which he carefully coiled, from the pulley-wheels.

"The others will have to be taken off," he exclaimed, as he drew out one of his screw-drivers and crawled to the next post. It was the work of some ten minutes to find and extract the two screws which fastened the little grooved wheel through which the wire ran to the post. Then he crawled carefully to the next one, and performed the operation in less time—then to a third—and so on, gradually nearing the gun and freeing the wire from the posts as he did so.

As he could not free the pulleys from the wire without cutting the latter, he had to push them along from post to post, and so they gradually accumulated until he had twenty of them together on the wire in this manner.

"At last!" he exclaimed, as he reached the shadow of the truck, shivering for a moment as he crawled over one of the dead bodies in his path. "It's lucky the signal's *beyond* the gun, or there wouldn't have been enough wire."

Then he cut the wire, strung off the score or so of pulley-wheels, thus clearing it, stole gingerly to the end of the truck, and, sheltered completely from the enemy's view, fastened the end of the wire securely to the broken coupling.

It had taken him the best part of three hours to perform this little operation, and now he commenced his slow, painful journey back. Whether or no the Boers were suspicious he could not tell, but certain it was that their flash-light glanced more repeatedly along the track, and once they threw a desultory shell that burst unpleasantly near.

By-and-by, however, he reached the spot where he had coiled the end of the wire, found it, and continued his journey, uncoiling the wire as he went, until he came to the end of it. Then he twisted the end into a large loop, which he carefully placed between the rails.

"It's lucky it's a dead level," he exclaimed, "and that it's a straight line. If only the wire stands the strain!"

Then he rose to his feet and hurried back to the camp. Day was breaking as he reached the British lines, and one of the first to encounter him was Colonel Baxter.

sir. Have I your permission to start now?"

With a grunt of astonishment the Colonel consented, and Finch walked off to the line and found the little locomotive with steam up. Getting on to the foot-plate, he motioned the driver to open the regulator.

"'AT LAST!' HE EXCLAIMED."

"Man alive," he began, "where the dickens have you been? You weren't so foolish as to take me at my word last night, surely?"

"I don't know about being foolish, sir," replied Major Finch, very quietly; "that remains to be seen. But I want my gun back again, and if that engine's in steam I'll go and get it at once."

"What on earth are you going to do? You *can't* get to the gun, man. It's impossible!"

"Quite so, but I can get the gun to me, I think."

"How?"

"If you wouldn't mind getting on that little hill, where my three guns are posted, you'll see the gun rescued, if I'm successful,

"Run her forward as fast as you can, and be prepared to stop and reverse her just the other side of the station," he exclaimed.

The Colonel and a few other officers, who had got wind that something extraordinary was on the move, watched the engine from the top of the kopje. As soon as she drew near the station the Boer guns opened a furious fire, and their shells began to drop about the all-important bit of line in front.

"The fool!" cried the Colonel, "I shouldn't have given him permission to perform such a mad bit of bravado. Ah, I thought so; of course he's had to stop."

For the engine had come to a halt just beyond the station.

"He'll have to come back now," said the Colonel. "Halloa—what's he doing? Why,

he's got down! He's gone in front of the engine—He's hit!—No, he's picking something up! Ah, now he's back on the foot-plate! What's his little game, I wonder?"

If the Colonel could have been present on the foot-plate he would have heard Finch say to the driver:—

"Have you reversed her?"

"Yes, sir."

"Open the regulator slowly then—very slowly mind, or the wire will snap. Do you hear?"

"All right, sir, I understand. We'll get her off, sir."

"Aha!" went on the Colonel. "I told you so. He's beginning to move back. He's precious slow over it, too."

"HE'S HIT!—NO, HE'S PICKING SOMETHING UP!"

"Look at the truck—look—look!" suddenly shouted the officers by his side.

"By George!" cried the Colonel. "It's moving—it's coming along! How in the name of——Hurrah! Bravo, Finch, bravo! He's got her off!"

For, apparently without any cause, the gun-truck began to move away from the river towards the British lines. Finch was bringing back his own. The wire had held, had stood the strain of starting the truck, and the rest was easy.

Amid a hail of shells that truck came in. The driver increased his speed. He had to stop as he began to round the curve to the south of Vredeburg, but the start and the pace attained had been enough to bring the truck with its precious burden rolling along through the station until the engine was properly coupled to it, and Finch brought his train to the camp in triumph.

"Well done, Finch," exclaimed the Colonel, the first to greet him on his return. "Never mind anything I said."

"I don't, sir," said Finch, with a smile. "I've got my little beauty back."

"Tell you what," shouted another officer, "you deserve——"

"What I hope I'll get," said the Major, "and that's breakfast and a snooze."

Celebrities in Shells.

By A. B. Maguire.

SILKS and satins, ribbons and rags, clothed our dollies in the long ago days; even bits of tinsel and bright-coloured papers were made to play important parts in the hands of juvenile dressmakers, and I have a very vivid recollection of a certain dilapidated wooden doll whose comical covering of moss and feathers was fondly believed to be a most realistic reproduction of Robinson Crusoe's famous winter garments; but these makeshifts and economical inventions fade into insignificance before the ingenious and entirely original method which Mrs. Tatlow, a charming and clever Irishwoman, has employed in dressing a number of Dutch dolls in the quaint, characteristic costumes representing the different centuries of dress and fashion in England. To the ordinary beholder these dolls are simply a wonderful sight, whilst the initiated find delight in the accurate details of their toilettes, the clever choice of material, as well as in their unique construction.

MRS. TATLOW, WHO MADE THESE CELEBRITIES IN SHELLS.
From a Photograph.

I first made the acquaintance of these curious figures at a *conversazione* in the Royal University of Ireland, where they aroused more enthusiasm and interest than all the scientific marvels exhibited that evening, and certainly presented a most unexpected sight in the halls of learning. Beneath the dazzling glare of the electric light, arranged on a table, was a large group of mimic kings and queens, knights and courtiers, whose suits of armour, trunk hose and doublets, flowing trains and elaborate bodices were composed solely and entirely of shells! It may seem almost incredible, but shells, and shells only, were used to accomplish this wonderful result, which, however, must not for one moment be confounded with the shell-work boxes and other atrocities so familiar to visitors at seaside resorts. In this case great artistic taste and conchological knowledge guided the clever fingers, and made Mrs. Tatlow's difficult task a marvellous success.

The crowd at the *conversazione* rendered a close and critical inspection of the dolls impossible, more especially as a ballot was going on to decide which was the most admired costume, an honour accorded to Elizabeth Woodville, Queen of Edward IV., by a very large majority of votes. The kind suggestion made by Mrs. Tatlow of a "private view" at her own house was very gratifying, and a few days later found me *en route* for Delbrook armed with note-book and camera to interview "The Royal Family," as they are invariably dubbed by their owner's intimates. There set out in great array for the purpose of being photographed were the dolls, which on nearer acquaintance proved even more wonderful than I had anticipated.

Apart from their unique garments, there was a quaintness about them that was quite amusing; the stiff figures and comical expressions of the Dutch dolls seemed more particu-

larly suited to display the various types and periods of costume than any modern wax effigies or china models could do, and the extraordinary fidelity with which the different details were copied proved Mrs. Tatlow's possession of "that infinite capacity for taking pains" which is akin to genius.

Being an enthusiastic collector of shells all her life, she brought to her work an immense conchological knowledge, which proved of the greatest assistance. It was, indeed, the pursuit of her favourite hobby that led indirectly to her attempting the task. One year, while spending the summer months in Guernsey, she entered a little shop, and while in conversation with the owner expressed her surprise that so few shells were to be found on the shores of the island. The old woman assured her that the dearth was quite of recent date, and that when she was a girl beautiful shells had been found there in great profusion.

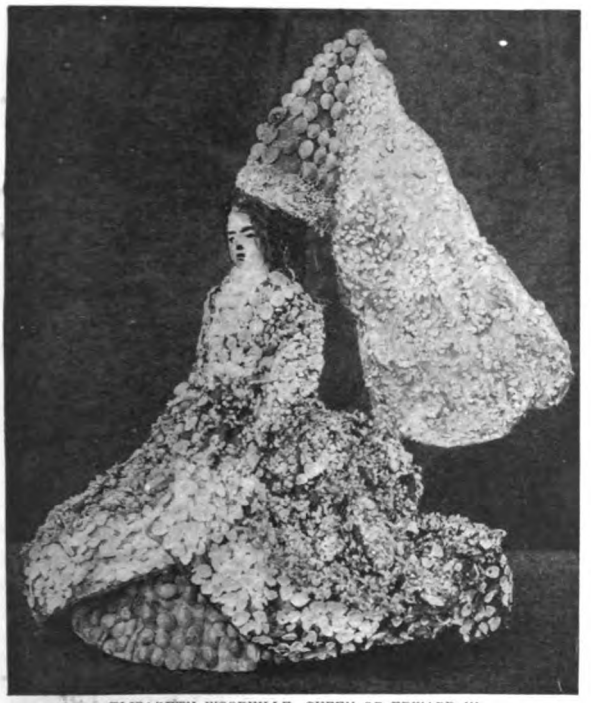
She then invited her customer into her little sitting-room to show her some choice specimens of "ocean's spoils," and there under a glass shade was displayed a doll clad in garments completely incrusted in shells. The old lady declared that it was over one hundred years old, and guarded it almost reverentially, and it required no little diplomacy on Mrs. Tatlow's part to be afforded an opportunity of examining it and ascertaining the method used for attaching the shells. Once given the clue she determined to go and do likewise, and by the time she returned to England she had planned out the whole scheme for her historic dolls. Then the real preparation began, records of ancient dress had to be looked up, pictures, coins, effigies on old tombs in Westminster Abbey studied, and dolls of a suitable style selected.

MATHILDA OF FLANDERS—1066.

The dressmaking stock-in-trade consisted only of a large supply of shells, some Brussels net, and a glue-pot; and the work, which, contrary to expectation, presented fewer difficulties than Mrs. Tatlow anticipated, proceeded rapidly. The skeleton garments, stiffened with glue, were moulded into their required form and folds before the shells were attached; designs and patterns were carried out in the larger-sized shells first, whilst the filling-in was completed with infinitesimally fine specimens. In many cases these tiny shells — really no bigger than grains of sand — were so skilfully manipulated, that they were made to simulate fabrics of a rough twilled surface, whilst others of beautiful and varied tintings were so disposed as to give the effect of rich embroidery and gorgeous jewelling.

KING ARTHUR.

Mathilda of Flanders, the first figure finished, proved a wonderful success, and certainly the Royal lady looked as if she had stepped straight out of the Bayeux tapestry from which, indeed, she was faithfully copied, the whole costume being carried out in delicately coloured shells (*Helix acuta*), collected about Dundrum Bay, Co. Down. Quainter still was King Arthur



ELIZABETH WOODVILLE, QUEEN OF EDWARD IV.

of England, in full armour, with helmet and shield, as represented by the famous statue in Innsbruck Cathedral.

For elaboration of detail and beauty of colouring few of the costumes could compete with that worn by Elizabeth, consort of Edward IV. The draped skirt was wonderfully arranged, and in its construction shells of the following varieties were used: *Rissoas*, *Cerithiums*, *Odostomias*, and *Trochus cinerareus*, the wide border being composed of choice specimens of *Nucula nucleus;* similar shells formed the bodice, the trimming of which was effectively carried out in *Axinus flexuosis;* the steeple headdress was made of cowries, and the flowing veil of a great variety of tiny shells, found, like all the others used in this toilette, on the shore at Roundstone, Co. Galway, a haunt little known to conchologists, but which has always been one of Mrs. Tatlow's happy hunting-grounds.

EDWARD THE FIRST.

The Strand at Malahide, Co. Dublin, provided nearly all the specimens used for the dress and armour of Richard Cœur de Lion, a very successful figure; the cross of lovely rosy red

RICHARD CŒUR DE LION.

Phasianella pulla telling effectively against the coat of mail, which was entirely composed of *Nucula nucleus;* the cloak was of *Pecten apercularis* and *Rissoas*, and the helmet of *Hydrobia ulvæ*.

Edward I. was a martial-looking figure, clad in armour composed of *Littorina obtuscata* and *Littorina litorea*, some beautiful specimens of *Nucula nucleus* being used for the belt.

A variety of shells was found in the coat of mail and helmet of Edward the Black Prince, whose attire was copied from an illustration in a very old French work on costumes. Queen Elizabeth's gorgeous garments were copied from the picture depicting her as she went to St. Paul's on November 24th, 1588, for the

QUEEN ELIZABETH. CAVALIER TIME OF CHARLES II. THE BLACK PRINCE.

picked collection of *Scalaria communis*, *Eulima polita*, *Marginella lævis*, *Arca lactea*, *Dentalium entalis*, etc.

A cavalier of the time of Charles II. was dressed in garments made of *Nucula nucleus* and *Axinus flexuosis*, the characteristic hat of the period being contrived out of *Nucula nucleus*; but this gentleman was scarcely as successful as many of his companions, owing to some thread lace having been introduced into his costume, which had a most in-

thanksgiving service after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Her robe, which was said to be incrusted with jewels, gave scope for a fine display of coloured shells and much ingenuity of arrangement, and her red hair was cleverly represented by a sea urchin. The shells used on the skirt, bodice, and stomacher were found on various parts of the coast of Alderney, and included a

QUEEN VICTORIA AT EIGHT YEARS OLD.

QUEEN VICTORIA IN HER CORONATION ROBES.

congruous effect, that fortunately was not observable in any other specimens.

Mrs. Tatlow quite redeemed her artistic reputation in her various nine-

THE PRINCE CONSORT DRESSED AS EDWARD III.

HENRY VIII.

teenth-century models, which were extremely clever. These included several of Queen Victoria, one resplendent in her coronation robes, the embroideries, fur trimmings, and jewels being imitated with wonderful fidelity.

I was particularly delighted with an interesting copy of a picture of the Queen at the age of eight years. The poke-bonnet almost covered the face, and the short dress, low bodice, and puffed sleeves were childishly quaint, and must have taken considerable time in their construction, for though *Trochus* were the only shells used, they had been most carefully selected, and the different varieties included the following: *Tumidus cineraeus*, *Montacuti*, *Zizyphinus*, *Millegranus*, *Exasperatus*, *Striatus*, etc. The dress was trimmed with *Phasianella pulla*, and the bonnet was made of *Arca lactea*, all the shells being from Alderney. The late Prince Consort was well portrayed in the costume of Edward III., in which he appeared in the year 1842 at Her Majesty's famous Plantagenet ball at Buckingham Palace.

GENTLEMAN OF THE EARLY VICTORIAN PERIOD.

Gentlemen's dress in the early Victorian period was represented by a striking-looking figure, with a ponderous top-hat; this, together with the long coat and trousers, was of *Arca lactea*, of dazzling whiteness; the short-waisted vest was of *Phasianella pulla*, all the garments being edged with *Cypræa Europæa*. Harry the Eighth was easily distinguished by his portly dimensions and characteristic hat.

Mrs. Tatlow's next piece of work promises to be much more ambitious than the historical dolls, which are shortly to be placed in a public museum.

Two Old Maids from School.

By John Oxenham.

Author of "God's Prisoner," "Rising Fortunes," etc.

CHRISTINE, the old white cat, from her ambush beneath Miss Georgie's petticoats, reached out a stealthy paw and raked Prince Charlie cleverly on the nose. And Prince Charlie, who had been inoffensively dreaming of the new Skye terrier, Flora, at the Scotts' house down the road, lifted up his voice and wept. Miss Georgie dropped one stockinged foot from the fender and cuffed Christine gently with it and said, "Naughty puss!" a punishment which seemed to Prince Charlie quite inadequate to the occasion, and which, indeed, Christine palpably took for a caress. He looked remonstratively across at Miss Georgie and Christine, and then, with an indignant snuffle at the injustice of the world in general, he glanced up at Miss Pauline and groaningly composed himself to rest again at her feet.

The strange thing was that Miss Pauline took no notice of the outrage. You might, of course, have thought that she had grown used to it, for Christine had been raking Prince Charlie's nose for the last eight years, ever since the day Charles de Nerval produced him from his pocket as if he were an apple, and tossed him into Miss Pauline's lap, and said, "Here, Aunt Polly, here's a baby for you." Placed on the floor on his unsteady little legs, Prince Charlie had caught sight of a great ball of white fur, the like of which he had never seen in all his life before. He had rollicked up to investigate it, and met with a reception that frightened him out of several years' growth. For months thereafter he had tried his best to heal the breach, but Christine would have none of him, and never missed an opportunity of impressing him with the fact that he was only a dog, and that she was a cat, and was there first.

Miss Georgie understood only too well the cause of her sister's absorption. She was on the point of speaking to her once or twice, and then pressed her lips tightly together and went silently on with her work, which was the making of a very beautiful lace collar after a special and quite peculiar method of her own.

It was nearly supper time, nine o'clock. The little round brass clock on the mantelpiece ticked cheerfully. The shaded lamp glowed softly, and in the old-fashioned grate, with wide flat hob on either side, a very small fire smouldered amid a heap of white ashes.

"Shall I put some more coal on, Pauline?" asked Miss Georgie.

From the next room there came a sound of a shovelful of coals flung carelessly on the fire. Miss Georgie winced and frowned slightly. Miss Pauline drew her fur cape up into the nape of her neck, and said, "No, dear, it's not cold, and it's nearly bedtime."

The girls laughed at Miss Pauline's fur cape, which she wore in season and out of season, and when they spoke of it at home some of their mothers would smile and say, "Does she wear that old cape yet? Why, I remember it when I was in the first form." But the old cape was good for many years yet, and it had been given to Miss Pauline by her uncle, Captain Paul de Nerval, the last time he returned from the neighbourhood of the North Pole. Then he had gone back thither and never returned, but Miss Pauline never failed to think of him whenever she buried her nose in the sweet-smelling sealskin which he had killed and cured with his own hands.

In addition to the fur cape, Miss Pauline wore a black silk dress, distantly approaching—as though under compulsion, and not by nature or of its own free will—the fashion of the previous year. She wore also immaculate linen cuffs and collar, and her hair, soft, and only here and there showing a silver thread, was brought down over the sides of her white forehead and rolled over her ears in bandeaux after the fashion of Mlle. Cléo de Mérode, a young person whose portrait Miss Pauline had seen in an illustrated paper, and whose style of coiffure she had admired and instantly adopted—very greatly to the advantage of her personal appearance.

She sat with one foot on the fender and the other crossed over it in an attitude and at an altitude which displayed an extremely neat ankle in a very neatly darned black silk stocking—an attitude which would have evoked her own severest condemnation had

she caught one of her pupils adopting it. Her brow was knitted, and her lips pursed tight. The book she held before her was "Todhunter's Algebra." She was getting up the lesson for her next Monday's class, and found unusual difficulty in concentrating her mind on it.

"TODHUNTER'S ALGEBRA."

To-morrow was Saturday, and a whole holiday, but Miss Pauline's work was cut out for her for to-morrow, and it was the thought of it that made the unknown quantity so unusually evasive and perplexing.

Miss Georgie was also robed in black silk, of the fashion of many years past. She wore her hair in little grey curls tight against her temples, like shells glued to a picture-frame, as Miss Pauline had also worn them until she made the acquaintance—in the illustrated papers—of Mlle. Cléo de Mérode. She wore a creamy-white wool shawl over her shoulders and knitted black silk cuffs round her slim, white wrists.

Miss Georgie was the housekeeper of the establishment, and took the first and second forms in elementary subjects. Miss Pauline—one year younger than her sister, but deemed by her quite youthful, especially since her adoption of the De Mérode coiffure—was the active and militant member of the firm, and taught most things, but especially French, which was the family tongue some generations back. She also took the younger girls in arithmetic and mathematics, wherein she found much tribulation, and the necessity for studying when her tired brain and jangled nerves should have been at rest.

Music she had from the very first flatly refused to teach.

"I love music," she said; "but teach it? Never!" And so, perforce, there had always been a music-mistress at Rochellaine.

And lately, through growing competition outside, they had been driven to get in a teacher of Higher Mathematics and German; and this young lady, Miss Hale, fresh from Newnham and full of the most advanced ideas on education and everything else, was a perpetual thorn in their sides. But they suffered in silence for the good of the school.

The slow but sure decay of Rochellaine was distinctly pitiful, and some of those who had passed through their hands ten and twenty years before, when they met at one another's houses, and had done comparing children and discussing servants, and the latest antics of the Ritualistic curate, would now and again come round to the subject of their old school-mistresses, and say among themselves: "It's really a shame. Those two poor old things slaving away yet. Something ought to be done for them. They haven't a chance, you know, against the High School and the College, and all the others. I kept my Gladys there just as long as I could, but she really got beyond them. All her friends go to the College, and she begged to be allowed to go, too, and so I've sent her this term, and Muriel will have to go, too, I

suppose, when her time comes. I was really sorry to take her away, but——"

But so it was in very many cases, and the Misses de Nerval, highly as they were esteemed, found the number of their pupils steadily decreasing, till Miss Georgie began to lie awake at night wondering what on earth they would do when the school should be unable to keep them. Thoughts of the workhouse as the ultimate end of it all overwhelmed her in the grim, grey hours of early dawn, when by rights people should be prevented by Act of Parliament from dwelling on their troubles. And many a night she quietly sobbed herself to the verge of hysterics, and had to plead headache and neuralgia and a touch of cold as excuse for her heavy eyes and watery looks next morning.

But it was only in the privacy of her innermost sanctum—her bed—that Miss Georgie gave way. During the day she masked her heavy heart in such cheerfulness of face as she could assume, and combated her sister's occasional lapses from the De Nerval fortitude—when Todhunter was more than usually aggravating and arithmetical problems stubbornly declined to work themselves out correctly on the black-board—with comforting assurances that clouds had silver linings, and that calm followed storm, and peace was the outcome of strife. All of which axioms Miss Pauline freely admitted, but did not see how any or all of them were going to alter by one jot or one tittle the inevitable end of their unequal fight.

For years the school had been dwindling just in proportion as the neighbourhood grew in size and importance. When Willstead was a comparatively small suburb, Rochellaine—the old-fashioned, low-roofed, wide-spread, ivy-clad house, sitting back from the common in all the simple grace of mullioned windows, peaked gables, and ample gardens, with an air of quiet aloofness, as of a high-born dame of last century amid a modern Bank Holiday crowd—Rochellaine was a house of importance, a house that had seen great doings in its time, and was even rumoured to have sheltered Royalty itself on one august occasion—a roystering Prince of the Blood, I believe, who had insisted on driving his own carriage because he said there were two coachmen on the box, and they were both too drunk to hold the reins, and having locked the trembling man inside, had immediately upset the carriage into a ditch and lain there singing until he was carried into Rochellaine—which at that time bore another name—to complete the night.

The Misses de Nerval were held in the highest esteem in Willstead, and half the families in the neighbourhood had passed through their gentle hands and learned from them many things which High Schools do not teach, and for which examination papers are never set, and learned without doubt from these descendants of the Huguenot De Nervals of La Rochelle to speak French with a purity of accent which High Schools do not as a rule impart.

But, as the suburb grew, other schools, more modern and more pushing, sprang up like mushrooms, and as they increased the school at Rochellaine faded and dwindled. Where there were formerly thirty boarders there were twenty, then ten, now only five. Where there were at one time fifty day scholars there were now but fifteen. The falling away of the boarders was the most serious part of the business, and appealed most sorely to Miss Georgie as Chancellor of the Exchequer, for there is more profit in what goes into school-girls' mouths than in what goes into one ear and out at the other. But do what they could in reduction of fees and timid little advertisements in the local paper, and very occasionally in the *Morning Post*, the rout went on, till the gallant array of thirty was reduced to five, and of those five two were leaving next term, and so far there had been no applications for the approaching vacancies.

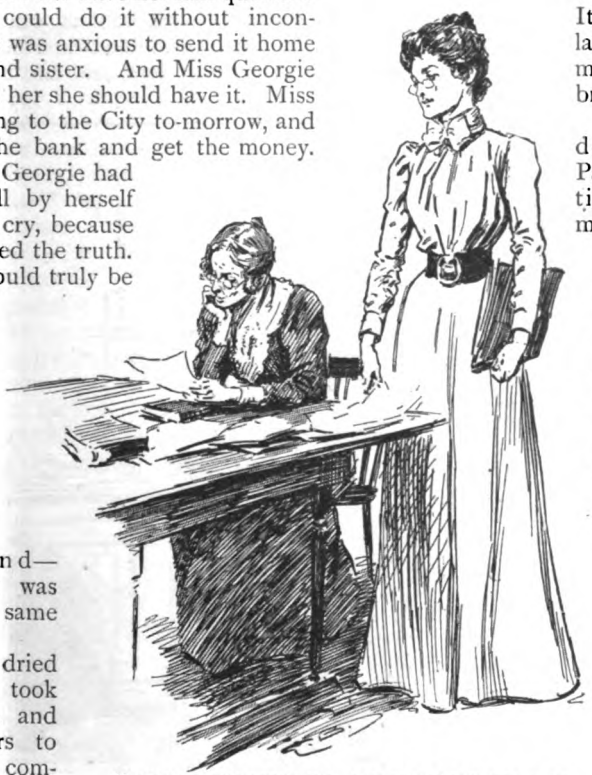
It was very pitiful, but it was nobody's fault. Miss Pauline and Miss Georgina taught just as well—well, almost just as well—as they had always taught. It was simply the natural course of things. The general advance of education demanded a higher level of attainment on the part of the teachers. Whether the pupils were one whit better off in the end; whether they developed into better men and women, or worthier fathers and mothers, may be doubted. But the demand was there, and it had to be filled, and the Misses de Nerval sorrowfully acknowledged to themselves their consciousness of their own deficiencies.

Hence the teacher for Higher Mathematics—Miss Hale. She was engaged, after heart-burning consideration of ways and means, as a possible and much-to-be-desired prop to their falling fortunes. She was a clever, go-ahead girl, mostly head, with a heart that was kept for home consumption, and beat warmly enough for a mother and an invalid sister away down in Hampshire. She knew her business, and was an admirable teacher. But her heart was kept entirely for her own

people, her head was filled with Higher Mathematics and German, and she was quite unconscious of the troubles of her employers. And that afternoon she had politely asked Miss Georgie to let her have her half-quarter's salary, if she could do it without inconvenience, as she was anxious to send it home to her mother and sister. And Miss Georgie had quietly told her she should have it. Miss Pauline was going to the City to-morrow, and would call at the bank and get the money. And then Miss Georgie had gone upstairs all by herself and had a little cry, because she had perverted the truth. Miss Pauline would truly be going into London, and, after all, Mr. Schwartzenbeck might be looked upon as a banker. Bankers, she believed, lent money on securities and—things, and it was very much the same kind of thing.

So then she dried her eyes and took up her burden, and went downstairs to tea and talked commonplaces in pure, liquid French, which was a delight to listen to, except to Miss Hale and the music-mistress, who were not fluent talkers in French, and who had a secret conviction that this rule of speaking French at meals had been promulgated for their special discomfiture, wherein, to whisper the truth, they were not absolutely at fault. For Miss Hale knew so very much more than they did on most subjects, that, for their own self-possession, the Misses de Nerval had felt it only becoming to afford themselves an opportunity of standing now and again upon a platform above and apart, where Miss Hale's Higher Mathematics availed not, and where the music-mistress stumbled grotesquely.

And after tea, while the five boarders and two teachers were in the schoolroom at preparation, Miss Georgie had hesitatingly broken the news of Miss Hale's perfectly legitimate request to Miss Pauline, and had hurriedly wound up with :—



"SHE POLITELY ASKED MISS GEORGIE TO LET HER HAVE HER HALF-QUARTER'S SALARY."

"I have got two collars finished, at least the second will be finished to-night, and—and—we must temporarily sacrifice something else. But—my dear—it breaks my heart that you should have to go again. It nearly killed you last time—that horrid man——" and she broke down.

"Hush, Georgie, dear!" said Miss Pauline, very pale and tight-lipped, "they might hear you. I shall get on all right. I'm sorry we have to descend to it, but we cannot help it."

"We—might ask her if she would mind waiting——"

"Not for a moment," said Miss Pauline, vehemently. "I could never look her in the face again. She has a right to it. It was understood she could have it half-quarterly if she wished. What—what will you send, Georgie, dear?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Miss Georgie, almost in a wail. "I've been turning all the things over in my mind, and I love them all so. It is like tearing out bits of one's heart to part with any of them."

"It is only for a time, dear," said Miss Pauline. But there was no conviction in her tone. She very much doubted if they would ever be in a position to redeem the things Mr. Schwartzenbeck had already made them advances on. Miss Georgie had no such doubts even, and she shook her head sadly.

"That chased salver of Godefroi de Nerval's——" she began.

"With his arms on——"

"It is very heavy, and the chasing is very beautiful——"

"I think I could carry it. Will you polish it up, dear? I must look up that algebra for Monday. London always knocks me up, and I shall probably take a day in bed on Sunday. I wish we could get Miss Hale to take all the mathematics—lower as well as

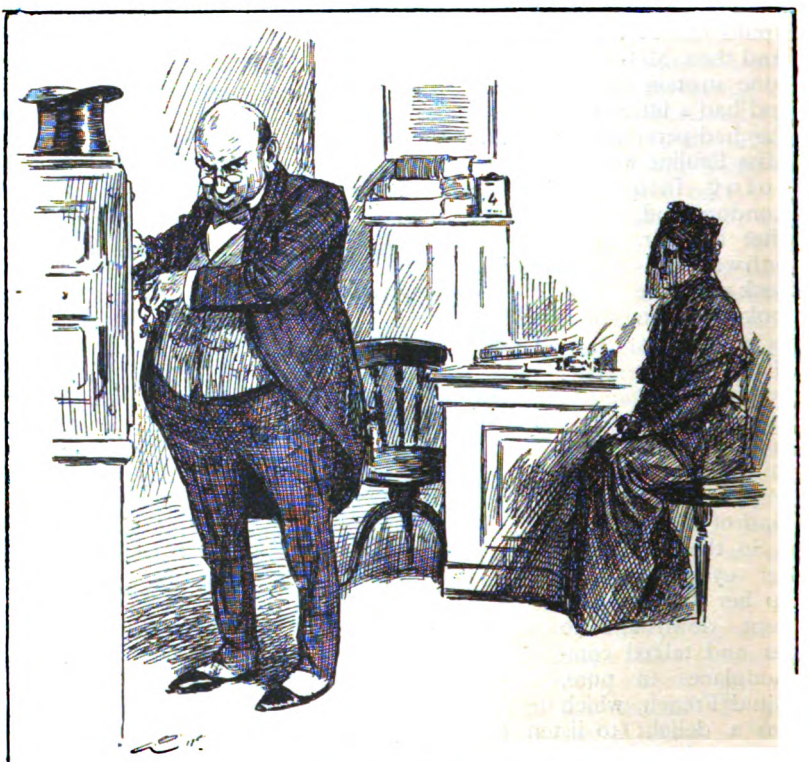
higher. The algebra puzzles me sometimes, so that I feel quite stupid in class."

Miss Georgie thought for a moment, and then suggested: "Suppose, Pauline, dear, you were ill for a few days, perhaps for a week, and I could ask her to take the younger ones too. We could re-arrange the classes somehow, and then, perhaps, we could get her to keep on with it. She is very willing and obliging, if only she wasn't quite so clever. I'm afraid she rather looks down on us, Pauline."

"Clever young people always look down on their elders," said Miss Pauline. "A week in bed would be like heaven. But—well, we'll see. Now let me try this wretched thing again. Sum money divided equally among certain number persons. If six more each would have received two shillings less than he did; if three fewer each would have received two shillings more than he did: find number persons and what each received. Let x denote number of persons, and y the number of shillings each received. Then xy is number of shillings in sum of money divided; and by supposition——" and her voice trailed off into an indistinct murmur of superconcentrated Todhunter.

But all over the page the letters and figures twisted themselves into the keen, dark face of Mr. Schwartzenbeck, the Jewish gentleman in Ebury Street, whose acquaintance she had first made two years ago under stress of a threatened distraint for taxes, which had shot grey threads through Miss Pauline's then newly assumed bandeaux, and had visibly whitened Miss Georgie's grey curls.

With trembling hands and knees, cloaked and veiled beyond all recognition, and with her bruised heart bumping the pavement at every step she took, Miss Pauline had then sought temporary relief through Mr. Schwartzenbeck by means of the cherished family relics—salvers, dishes, goblets, which had heard the booming of the guns in Rochelle in the old persecution days, and had been the pride of



"TEMPORARY RELIEF THROUGH MR. SCHWARTZENBECK."

the De Nervals ever since, and which their last degenerate descendants—said Miss Pauline to herself—were now carrying piece by piece to the pawnbrokers. Certainly Mr. Schwartzenbeck was the pawnbroker of the aristocracy, and the charmingly dressed lady who stepped so lightly from a hansom into Mr. Schwartzenbeck's private door and stepped so jauntily back into the hansom and drove away so unconcernedly—while poor Miss Pauline was still fluttering to and fro on the opposite pavement, in the hope that by familiarizing herself with the look of the house she would in time find courage to cross the Rubicon and enter it—was a Countess to whom Mr. Schwartzenbeck had just advanced £5,000 on her jewellery. He knew the Countess

well, and her brothers still better. They were all old clients of his, and turned to him as a matter of course whenever the springs ran dry or the Fates were adverse. And—once he was satisfied, which he was the moment she opened her mouth, that she was not, as he had thought she was, a private inquiry agent on the track of the little Countess — he never bestowed a second thought on the tremulous little veiled lady—Miss Norman—who was so very anxious to be assured beyond all possibility of doubt that the things would be there when she brought back the twenty sovereigns which would redeem them. She had been several times since, but so far she had never redeemed anything, and he did not think she ever would. He knew so much of human nature, did Mr. Schwartzenbeck. But he treated her fairly and well, and it was not Mr. Schwartzenbeck himself so much as the fact of having to go to him, and the assumption of a false name—which she believed was akin to the crime of forgery, and brought her well within the clutches of the law—that sent the hot and cold chills running up and down Miss Pauline's back as she sat before the fire, and rendered her quite unfit for the study of even the lower mathematics, that night when Christine the cat smote Prince Charlie on the nose for the fifty-thousandth time since first they met.

Miss Pauline peered intently through her spectacles at Todhunter. Miss Georgie peered through hers at the fine-spun web which seemed to flow out of her finger-ends. It was nearly finished. She intended it to be quite finished before she went to bed that night. Then Pauline would take it and the other one down to a certain establishment in Sloane Street, and would bring back two sovereigns, which would be a little bit towards Miss Hale's half-quarter's salary. And the establishment in Sloane Street would in due course sell the lovely collars to a Duchess, or a Countess, or the wife of a South African millionaire, for £5 each, at which price the purchasers considered them an absolute trouvaille or a very great bargain as the case might be, and so everyone was pleased. But the little lady who wrought bits of her eyes, and bits of her heart, and bits of her life into them came off poorest in the transaction, which unfortunately is the way of the world.

Now and again Miss Georgie took off her spectacles and wiped them clandestinely under cover of her work. Miss Pauline was too busy to wipe hers, though her eyes and her head ached almost as badly as did her heart.

They would both have been the better of stronger glasses, but, for reasons, they kept constantly postponing the often-spoken-of purchase of them.

Miss Pauline, having gone through one proposition ten times, and arrived each time at the result that x was Mr. Schwartzenbeck, and that the sum of money to be divided was ridiculously inadequate to the number of persons who were clamouring for it, at last put down Todhunter with a sigh, just in time to catch a spasm of pain on her sister's face.

"Neuralgia again, Georgie, dear? Do try some of that——"

"No, it was only Christine. She was stretching, poor dear, and she put her claw into my foot," and she cuffed Christine gently again with her stockinged foot, and Christine chose to consider it an invitation to frolicsome combat, and gently inserted an exceedingly sharp eye-tooth into the tenderest part of Miss Georgie's black stocking. Miss Georgie gave a muffled shriek, and laid aside her work and hoisted the delinquent by the neck on to her knee, from which point of vantage Christine immediately proceeded to spit defiance and everlasting hatred at Prince Charlie. He was fast asleep under the tent of Miss Pauline's skirt, but he sprang up with a yelp at the sound which generally accompanied a scratch, and at sight of the elevation of his enemy he proceeded to bark, and Miss Pauline picked him up and put him on her knee. Prince Charlie had learnt, two days after he came into the house, that that sharp little staccato bark of his would procure him anything in this world—except the friendship of Christine—if he only kept it up long enough.

"I think we're all getting past work," said Miss Pauline, gloomily, and her sister's lip quivered. She had been painfully aware of it for a long time past.

The little brass clock struck nine. Miss Georgie carefully wrapped up her work in a white handkerchief and placed it in a drawer. Miss Pauline slipped Todhunter, whose very name she loathed, behind the coal-scuttle, and rang the bell for supper, and Miss Hale and the music-mistress and the five boarders filed solemnly in and shivered slightly; the room was so much colder than the one they had just left.

Supper over. "It is your turn to read, Georgina," said Miss Pauline; and the youngest boarder went to the shelf and

brought out the old Huguenot Bible with "Neufchastel, 1535," stamped on the cover, and the old, mystic, squat, black letters inside, which none of them could read except Miss Georgie and Miss Pauline, which ancient tome the sisters held in higher reverence even than the silver plate of their ancestors, though Mr. Schwartzenbeck would probably not have advanced twopence on it without very considerable misgivings.

Long after everyone else was asleep—except Miss Pauline, who could not sleep for thought of the morrow—Miss Georgie was still quietly at work on her collar. It was two o'clock before it was finished, and she smoothed it out on the darker table-cloth and regarded it with loving pride. And if to the wearer of that graceful collar came thoughts half so sweet and comforting as had come to the lonely worker during those midnight hours she had cause to be grateful.

In the middle of the forenoon — Miss Pauline having gone to the bank, and Miss Hale and the music-mistress and the five boarders having gone for their usual Saturday morning jaunt into the village—there came a ring at the front door, and the maid brought word to Miss Georgie that a gentleman wanted to see Miss de Nerval.

A new pupil perhaps. Pauline generally attended to these important matters, and she went down to the drawing-room in a flutter of expectation.

A tall, dark man, with keen eyes and a prominent nose, rose at her entrance, and said, "Miss de Nerval?"

It was Mr. Schwartzenbeck. She was sure of it. Mr. Schwartzenbeck undoubtedly come to demand instant repayment of all his advances under pain of death—or exposure, which was the same thing.

Miss Georgie's heart went down into her shoes, and then scrambled up like a frightened rabbit into her throat, and she whispered, hoarsely:—

"Yes."

"Is Mr. Charles de Nerval living here now, may I ask, madam?"

"My nephew?—he is dead. What is it you wanted with him?"

"Dead?"

"He died with Charles Leslie Kay in the Australian desert eight years ago."

"Dear me! I wonder—I fear my visit is a useless one, then, madam — I am acting on behalf of a gentleman who was prominent in the formation of a company, in which Mr. Charles de Nerval had a few shares. The company has been practically moribund these many years. My principal having amassed a large fortune is devoting a portion of it to settling up some of these old matters. He is troubled with the thought that some of his speculative enterprises may have cost dearly those who at that time had faith in his name, and so he is following up the holders of these old shares and taking them off their hands at the prices they originally paid for them."

"That is very generous of him."

"Well," said the dark-faced man, with a smile, "as to that, I don't suppose he'll ever feel it. He is very rich."

"Still, I consider it a very noble thing to do. But how does this affect my nephew?"

"Mr. Charles de Nerval held a few shares in one of these companies—the—let me see"

"MISS GEORGIE'S HEART WENT DOWN INTO HER SHOES."

—and he consulted a pocket-book—"the Bank of Afghanistan—no, excuse me, the Saghalien Concessions—yes, that is it—the Saghalien Concessions, Limited. Your nephew had one hundred ordinary and ten deferred shares in that company, madam; and if he were here and could produce them, or if you could produce them and show your title to them, I could hand you in exchange for them just what your nephew originally gave for them, viz., £100 for the ordinary shares and 10s. for the deferred shares—curious idea, deferred shares at 1s. each."

Miss Georgie gasped. One hundred pounds and ten shillings! Why, it was wealth. Then she grew thoughtful.

"Saghalien Concessions, Limited!" She remembered the name. "Were they about so big?" she said, indicating with her slim French hands, "and printed in red? A figure of a woman and——"

"Here is one of the certificates, madam," said Dark-face, with the air of one anxious only to assist. "The ordinary shares are, as you say, printed in red, the deferred in green."

"Exactly. I remember them now perfectly. When Charles was leaving for Australia he threw them to me in a bundle, and said, 'Here, Aunt Georgie. I've given Prince Charlie to Aunt Polly to remember me by. You keep these, and whenever you look at them think of me. They may turn up trumps some time, but——'"

There she considerately broke off short, for Charles de Nerval had expressed his opinion of the promoter of the company in somewhat lurid language. He had immediately apologized for his flaming words, but stated with additional ones that even they were quite inadequate to the occasion, and that his present to Aunt Polly was far and away the better value. And then he had gone away into the wilderness with Charles Leslie Kay and died there, just as his Uncle Paul had died at the North Pole or thereabouts.

"And do you know where the shares are, madam? For if so, I shall have the great pleasure of handing you in exchange for them the sum of £100 10s."

"It's years and years since I saw them last. But if you can wait for a few minutes I will look in one or two likely places."

"I am quite at your service, madam," said Dark-face, politely.

"If I cannot find them, my sister may know where they are. She has gone into town, but I am afraid she won't be back for a couple of hours. May I offer you a glass of wine while you wait?"

"You are very kind, madam," and Miss Georgie departed on her quest, trembling with excitement and hope.

One hundred pounds and ten shillings! If only she could find them, what a joyful surprise for Pauline on her return! She remembered her reading of the previous night, and looked upward with a prayer of thanks which no words could have adequately interpreted.

When the maid took in the wine to Dark-face he poured himself out a glass, and after she had left the room he ran it knowingly under his nose, sipped it, murmured disappointedly, "Old maid's wine," and poured it into the bowl of a large plant in the window. The plant shortly afterwards sickened and died, and Miss Georgie never could make out what had cut it off in its prime, for she had raised it from a seedling, and it had always enjoyed the most perfect health.

She returned shortly, with a disappointed face. She had looked in all the most likely places, and the shares were not in any of them.

"You couldn't — wait till my sister returns?"

"Do you think it likely she will know, madam, where they are?"

"Well, I thought I would know better than she; but, you see, it's years since I saw them, and she might just happen to know."

"If you like I will call again on Monday."

"Oh, *would* you be so kind? It's really too bad to give you all that trouble. Is there anywhere in the City I could send in case you find it impossible to call back?"

"Oh, I will call without fail, madam. Suppose we say three o'clock."

"It is very good of you."

"Only my duty, madam. I'm not the principal in this transaction. I only wish I was. He is a very rich man indeed——"

"A very noble man, I am sure."

"By the way, I need hardly mention it, perhaps, but Mr.—er—my employer does not desire a word of this to get abroad, madam. He is past all that — arrived at that happy state where he can afford to do things without letting his left hand know what his right is about, and all that kind of thing."

"A very noble man, I am sure. *Won't* you take another glass of wine before you go? Pray do!"

"I thank you, madam, but I rarely take anything of the kind," and Dark-face departed

and made a bee-line for the Station Hotel, and rinsed out his mouth with whisky and water. And Miss Georgie was reminded once again by the remark he had just made of the chapter she had read the night before.

When Miss Pauline crawled into the house under all the weight and shame of her nefarious errand, her sister met her with a face all ablaze with the wonderful news. Miss Pauline caught fire too, hastily handed over the money she had brought back with her, and tore upstairs to delve into hidden corners and dusty trunks after those golden shares.

It was tea-time before they unearthed them inside an old bonnet-box underneath a bonnet that had never been worn because of Charles de Nerval's death.

Their white hands trembled as they counted the certificates lest one should be a-missing. For every thin slip was worth a golden pound, except the deferred shares printed in green, and even they were worth a shilling each, and therefore not to be despised.

"Those old ladies have had good news from somewhere," said Miss Hale, after tea, to the music-mistress. "I'm glad. I thought they looked worried the last day or two."

"Jane was telling me that a gentleman called this morning and saw Miss Georgina, and she sent wine in to him. Perhaps he was an old lover come to life again," said the music-mistress, who naturally had a sentimental twist.

Miss Georgie, with Christine on her knee, and Miss Pauline, accommodating Prince Charlie in like fashion, were sitting in their little parlour that evening, very gratefully counting their chickens and laying their plans for the investment of this unexpected windfall.

"Supposing he should never come back, Georgie," said Miss Pauline, with sudden misgiving.

"Oh, but he will, I am sure. He spoke so nicely and he looked——"

Well, if she spoke the strict truth she would have had to confess that the ungracious thought would now and then obtrude itself that their unknown benefactor might, without any very great difficulty, have discovered a more—a less—well, an agent who might possibly have inspired people with more confidence.

"It would be too cruel," she said, slowly. "And why should anybody play us a hoax like that? Stick them up here on the mantelpiece, Pauline. It seems more real when I look at them."

There came a ring at the door, and the two old ladies jumped.

"It's him," said Miss Georgie.

"He," said Miss Pauline, with a sparkle of amusement. "The verb 'to be' takes the same case after it as before it."

"Oh, bother!" said Miss Georgie, and Christine fired off an objectionable word on her own account at Prince Charlie on the opposite headland, and Charlie yelped.

"Mr. Scott, ma'am," announced the maid.

"Have you shown him into the drawing-room, Jane?"

"Yes'm."

"Ask him to step in here where the fire is," and John Scott came in.

A fine, tall, upstanding man, father of the three little Scotts now in the school, he had sat on the new-comers' back bench in the first form when he was four and a half alongside the chubby little rosebud who afterwards became his wife. She had come to school for the first time the same day as he did, and he offered her some sweeties when she cried. They always stoutly maintained that their courtship began that very day, and they both had very warm hearts towards the two old ladies of Rochellaine.

"Well, John!" they said, in one welcome breath.

"Why, you're looking ten years younger, Miss Pauline. Miss Georgie, you remind me of the first day I came to school and sat next Mary Grahame on the back bench and gave her sweeties. What a little picture she was, and what a very nice boy I was!" and they all laughed merrily.

John Scott was generally laughing or smiling, and Miss Georgie and Miss Pauline could afford to laugh now with £100 10s. smiling at them from the mantelpiece.

John Scott pulled Prince Charlie's ear and Christine's tail, and was rewarded with a yelp and a back that arched like a broken bow. He had come on a difficult errand—to proffer assistance to two dear old ladies who would infinitely sooner have died than have knowingly shown the slightest need of it. His wife had urged him to it after much discussion. She knew there was pinching at Rochellaine, from a hundred little signs that a man would never notice if he lived to be one hundred and seventy-five. And he had come at last with extreme reluctance. "I'd give 'em anything, Mollie," he had said, as he kissed his wife, "but I'd sooner do anything than offer it to them."

And here he was, and he had not the remotest idea how to begin. He felt very

much as he had done when he sat on the back bench of the first form that first day, only Mollie was not here to help him through now or to be helped, which was much the same thing.

Then suddenly his eye, wandering round in wild despair, caught sight of the bundle of Saghalien Concessions on the mantelpiece.

"Good Lord! Where did you get those?" he gasped.

Miss Georgie looked at Miss Pauline, and Miss Pauline looked at Miss Georgie, and finally Miss Georgie said, "John is not like anybody. I really think we might tell John. Don't you think so, Pauline?" and Miss Pauline nodded.

John was in the City—a banker, in fact—and he would probably know if the whole thing was only a hoax.

you have proof, and Miss Pauline was witness of the gift?"

They nodded, and watched him through their spectacles like two little bright-eyed owls.

"Then, my dear ladies—— By the way, what time did you say the emissary of this large-hearted benefactor was coming back on Monday?"

"Three o'clock."

"Then, as I was about to say, when I interrupted myself," he said, with a delighted chuckle, "I shall surprise my wife by lunching at home on Monday, and I shall be here to see your friend."

"Why?" asked Miss Georgie, who looked upon this as somewhat in the nature of a personal reflection on herself.

"Because, my dear Miss Georgie, Saghalien Concessions, Limited, have turned up trumps in the most surprising manner."

"THEY NODDED AND WATCHED HIM."

So Miss Georgie retailed the whole matter to him, and he sat listening, with eyes that shone very brightly.

"You look just as you used to, John, when you'd got an answer that no one else in the class had," said Miss Georgie. "What is the matter with you?"

"I've got an answer that no one else in this class has," said John Scott, in much excitement. "May I look at those shares, Miss Georgie?"

He looked them over carefully.

"And these were given to you by your nephew, Charles de Nerval, of whose death

The two little ladies went red and white, and began to tremble visibly.

"The market value of that little bundle at twelve o'clock to-day was——" and he figured it out for them on a piece of paper, so that they should see it with their own eyes—"exactly £3,250 sterling. They may be worth more on Monday morning, but if you will be guided by me you will sell as soon as you can, and invest in something less startling, and nearer home. Your friend could certainly have afforded to pay a second

railway fare, Miss Georgie, if he had got them at the price he offered."

"Am I awake, Pauline?" asked Miss Georgie.

"You are, dear, and so am I, but John is the widest awake of all. It was my mathematics that taught him all that," at which the banker laughed joyfully.

"To-morrow is the Lord's," murmured Miss Georgie, with bowed head and misty eyes.

"Yes, to-morrow's Sunday," said John Scott. "But on Monday I'll dispose of them for you at best market price, and I'll take them with me now to make sure of them."

But Miss Georgie was thinking of something quite different.

"You did a rare stroke of business for those dear old ladies, Mollie," said John Scott, when he went back to his wife and told her the whole matter. "You wrought better than you knew, my dear, when you pecked me out of the house to go and call on them. By Jove!" he said, with a sudden blaze of anger. "Think! if I hadn't happened in there to-night they'd have parted with those shares for £100, and been delighted to get it. I'd like to break that fellow's neck into a thousand little pieces, whoever he is. If I can prosecute him for attempted fraud I'll land him in gaol."

Punctually at three o'clock on Monday afternoon the dutiful messenger of the Magnanimous Benefactor rang the bell at Rochellaine and was shown into the drawing-room.

But at sight of John Scott he—no, he did not even hesitate—he simply turned tail and fled past the astonished maid, and sped out of the front door, and through the front gate, and across the common, and was seen no more.

Saghaliens had risen still further by Monday morning, and John Scott had disposed of them for a little under £4,000.

The Misses de Nerval no longer keep school. Since the school refused to keep

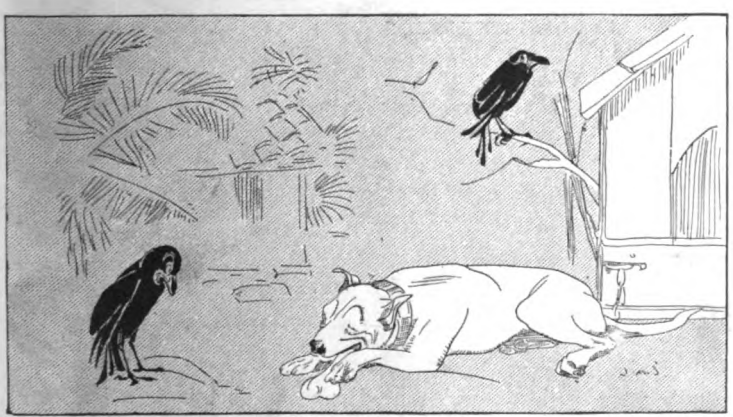
"HE SIMPLY TURNED TAIL AND FLED."

them, they parted with it on friendly terms. Miss Hale reigns in their place, and turns out extremely clever girls. Whether they are one whit better or happier, or make one whit better wives and mothers, than the girls Miss Georgie and Miss Pauline used to turn out, I am still in doubt.

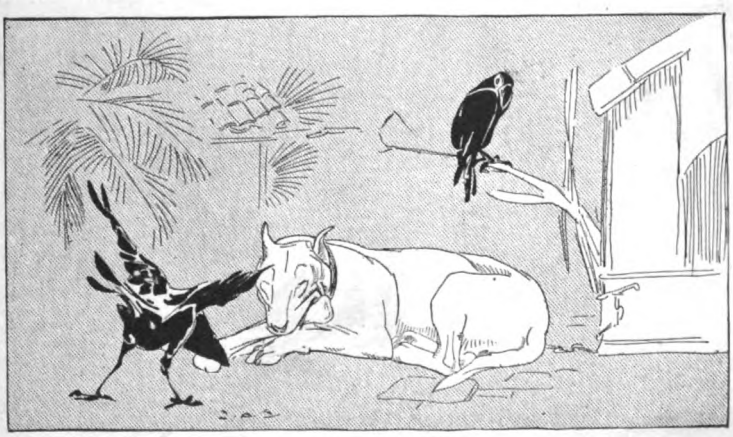
John Scott says that, with certain exceptions who bear the name of Scott and some family resemblance to himself and Mary Grahame, they most certainly do not, and on the whole I am not quite sure that I am not more than half inclined to agree with him.

Animal Actualities.

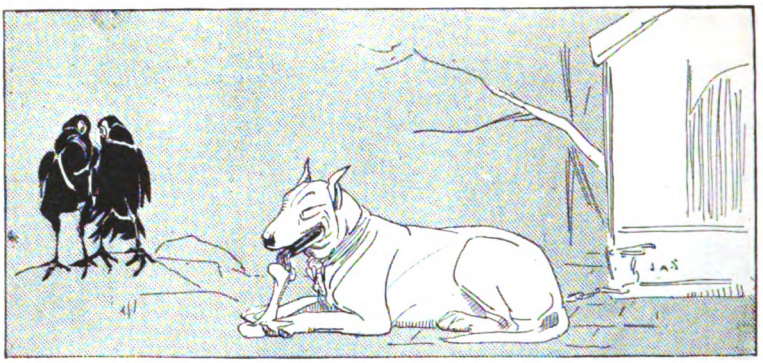
ALL the family of crows are birds of demoniac ingenuity and malicious humour. Perhaps the small black crow of Ceylon—called *Corons splendens*, because of its glossy, blue-black plumage—is quite the most cunning. There are many tales of its cleverness and audacity, and among them perhaps the most characteristic is the tale of its habitual manner of robbing a dog. The dog sits, we will say, by his kennel, enjoying a bone—a bone which attracts the affectionate regards of a crow. The bird comes straightway to the ground a foot or two from the dog's nose, and begins to dance and attitudinize, with the view of inducing him to drop the bone as he watches. The dog, however, though perhaps lazily interested, is not quite such a fool as that, but holds tight to his prize. So, after much twisting and clowning and skipping, the crow flies off, and takes another crow into consultation and partnership. The articles of con-



ENVY.

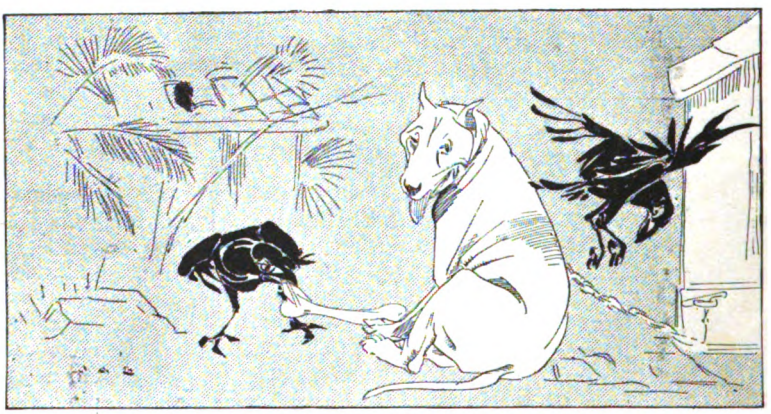


BLANDISHMENT.



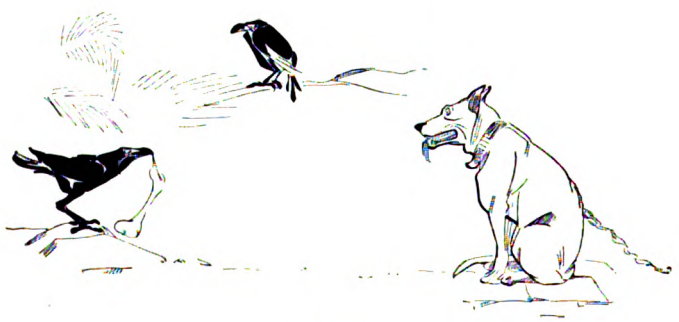
A PLOT.

federacy having been duly agreed on, back comes crow number one, and recommences his comedy with great vigour, hopping and pirouetting. The dog's attention thus that with a yelp of anguish he turns on his assailant, who instantly gets out of danger. But the momentary turn has been enough: crow number one has snatched the bone,



THE THEFT.

engaged in front, crow number two makes a sudden swoop from behind, and fetches that dog such a mighty peck on the spine, and the despoiled dog is left lamenting, while the crows retire to divide the plunder according to partnership agreement.



ROBBED.

The Boer "Tower of London."

A VISIT TO THE STAATS MUSEUM, PRETORIA.

By Rev. John C. Harris, of Johannesburg.

[*The writer of the following interesting article, a clergyman who has been driven from his home in Johannesburg, took the photographs himself, and these are the only ones ever taken of the many objects of peculiar interest to the British people at the present time.*]

"NOW that our burghers are busy fighting for 'land and folk,' I venture to appeal to them to remember our State Museum. Let them all be on the look-out for any relics likely to be of interest—such as flags, lances, helmets, swords, etc. Such articles should find a place in our new Museum, so that we may show posterity at what a price, and against what wicked and cruel devices of our enemies, we won our freedom."

So wrote Dr. Gunning, the Superintendent of the Pretoria State Museum, in the notorious *Standard and Diggers' News*, just a month after the Boers commenced the present war.

Most Englishmen will regard the sublime confidence and assurance of the Doctor with amusement. And yet few realize what a powerful factor that Museum, stuffed away in an obscure corner in Pretoria, has been in keeping alive the racial feud, stimulating the bitter antipathies, and inflating the fancied prowess of the hundreds of back-veldt Boers, who have, during their infrequent visits to Pretoria, gazed open-mouthed at its treasures.

It is to them all that the Tower of London and Holyrood Palace and Westminster Abbey are to Britons. All that, with a "Madame Tussaud's" thrown in! It is the only history they can read, the shrine of all their heroic traditions and glowing achievements, the record of their long fugitive years, of their "treks" and battles—and victories. There the hairy, grimy old veteran tells his boys of Bronkhorst Spruit and Majuba, of Dingaan and Malaboch, of the Voor-trekker's — and of Jameson. Here have been fed and fanned the slumbering fires of hate, the lingering love of liberty, and the perverted sense of patriotism: the factors and forces which have made the brave but ignorant people an all too easy prey to the scheming cliques and mercenary intrigues of opposing factions, the wild conflict of which has flung them with the force of Fate to their destiny—and their undoing.

It never struck me in this light until one day I watched some of the burghers who had "outspanned" their waggons on the market square outside stroll around the cases, and gaze vacantly at the well-arranged treasures of the Museum.

I was amazed to find that almost everything was associated in their minds with the English—the "verdomde Rooinek."

As you pass through the turnstile to enter, the word *U I T* indicates the way of exit. But you observe how cleverly the authorities have turned the letters *O u t*, which were cast in the iron, into the Dutch word. The

From a] THE ENTRANCE TO THE PRETORIA MUSEUM. [*Photograph.*

English word must not be seen. Immediately inside the door is a fine model of one of the Castle boats, presented to President Kruger by Sir Donald Currie.

"Ah, see!" said one old Boer to the others, "there is the ship that brings the Rooineks over the sea." A significant grunt followed; until, catching sight of an *aas vogel* (vulture) suspended from the iron roof, another said, with exultant gutturals, "Yah, and there is the bird that eats the *rooi baatjes* (red-coats) when we shoot them on the veldt." "Yes," said a third, with rising triumph, "and here is Jameson's revolver."

From a] REVOLVER SHOWN AS DR. JAMESON'S. *[Photograph.*

There is, of course, the usual assortment of horrors and curios, the bottled snakes, dried birds, musty skulls, and the inevitable mummy—in this case a very dilapidated one. But these to the average Boer are meaningless. His eye sees only that which it brings with it, and to him history is of yesterday, and to-morrow.

All the sturdy patriotism of his race, all the wild freedom of the veldt, all the blood-feud of the years, and the rankling memories of past grievances gleam in his eyes and ring in his tremulous voice as he gazes at these dumb but eloquent relics of his age-long struggle.

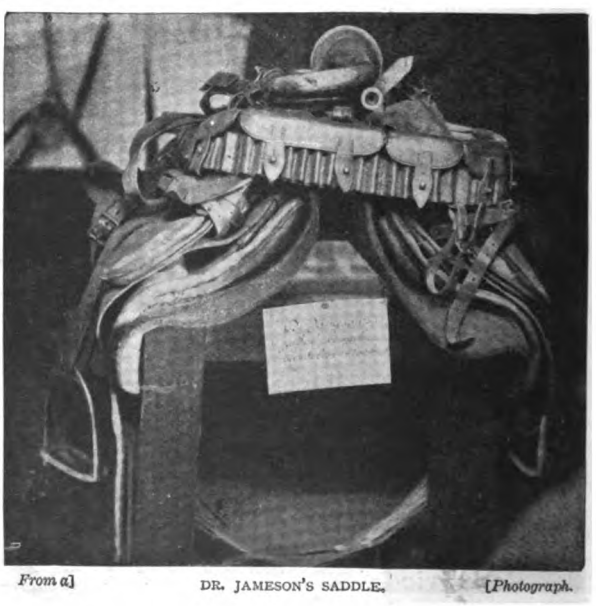
On several occasions I have visited the Museum, and the photographs herewith were taken by the special permission of the courteous superintendent, a few weeks before the war commenced.

Almost the first object to catch the eye, on entering, was a large revolver labelled "Jameson's Revolver." I say *was*, for on the occasion of my last visit it was missing. While photographing it I remarked to the Hollander attendant (to whose kindness and courtesy I am very much indebted), "It seems not to have been used very much, does it?" "Well," he replied, in a burst of confidence, and with a laugh, "it wasn't Jameson's at all! We got it from a safe in Johannesburg at the time of the Raid; but"—with an apologetic smile—"we must have something to show the burghers when they come, you see."

Yes, I saw!

"But," he went on, lest I might think the whole thing was a fraud, "these are genuine—picked up at Doornkop—and so is Jameson's saddle." Would I care to see it?

Of course I would. It was in one of the small rooms leading off the main hall, and I had no little difficulty in getting a good photograph of it, but here it is in the lively company of skeleton fishes and Kaffir spears. It is still a good saddle, and "Dr. Jim" may yet ride abroad on it some day. May he never repeat his magnificent madness!



From a] DR. JAMESON'S SADDLE. *[Photograph.*

Hanging on the wall, as though keeping grim guard over the Raiders' relics, is an excellent photograph of President Kruger as he appeared nearly thirty years ago, and which reveals the sullen, dogged determination of the man. Not less determined is the glance of the "British Lion," which glares with its glassy eyes upon the old President. Surely a significant juxtaposition that these two should have thus faced each other for so long in that dusty, flag-floored hall!

PRESIDENT KRUGER IN 1870.
From a Photograph.

Perhaps the most interesting articles in the place are the relics of the old Voor-trekkers—the Pilgrim Fathers of the Boers, the sturdy and untamed spirits who, from the days of Van Rubeck to the present time, have sought a home in the vast wilderness, setting out in their waggons upon the great wastes, as the early mariners pushed out upon the unknown seas: and as their great hero, Abraham, went out "not knowing whither he went."

The modern globe-trotter who, landing in Cape Town from a palatial liner, is whirled in a comfortable saloon across the great Karoo and the arid highlands to the goldfields, little thinks of the privation, the loneliness, and the weary sufferings of these old pilgrims and pioneers. Among themselves there were few to chronicle the tragedy and pathos of it. Dr. Theal, in his history of the Boers, recounts some of the tale, but the most pathetic and touching witnesses are the few relics gathered by their descendants, and enshrined in the National Museum.

From a] PIET RETIEF'S BIBLE. *[Photograph.*

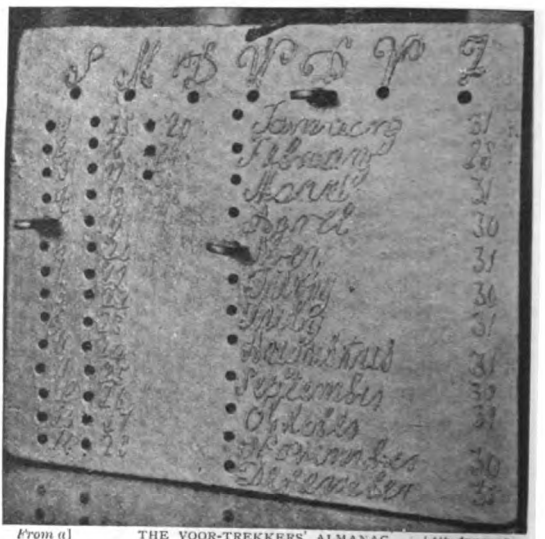
Here is the huge Bible of Piet Retief, one of the leaders of the great trek of 1814. A ponderous volume it is — Dutch, of course, and fearfully and wonderfully illustrated, as will be seen from the realistic picture of Jonah, shown in the photograph.

But the most curious, and most prized, of all the Voor-trekker relics is the old almanac shown here. Out on the wide veldt, trekking for month after month, far from the haunts of men, these daring old

From a] "THE BRITISH LION." *[Photograph.*

Boer-Bedouins must have often lost count of time but for this simple and primitive contrivance. It is a small black board, about two feet square. Along the top run the initial letters of the week-days; down the left are rows of holes numbered up to thirty-one; and down the centre a similar row marking the months of the year. Three pegs serve to indicate at a glance the day of week and month. In the photograph the date marked is Donderdaag (Thursday), 5th May.

Apparently there were no Leap-years in those days. So greatly do the authorities in Pretoria value this old curiosity that at the time of my last visit—in September, 1899—I learned that a facsimile of it was being made for the Paris Exhibition.



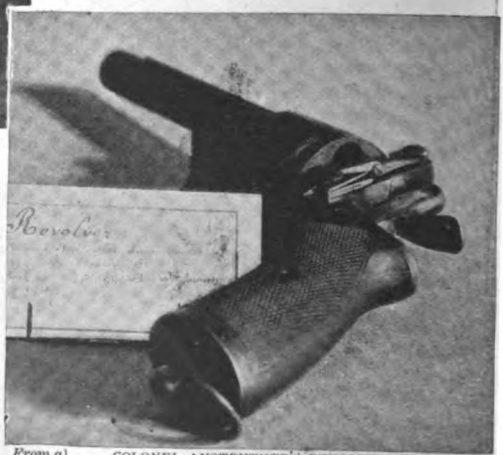
From a] THE VOOR-TREKKERS' ALMANAC. *[Photograph.*

From a] A TYPICAL BOER CHAIR. *[Photograph.*

Here is an old Boer chair, which once adorned a stoep on some farm, in which the fat old farmer or his vrow sat, drowsily drinking the eternal coffee, and grunting to his slaves. Its size is not exaggerated, and calls up visions of "Tant Sannie," so graphically portrayed by our "only green Olive."

The next is a melancholy reminder of a sad story, which sheds little glory on British discretion or Boer honour. It is the revolver of the brave Colonel Anstruther, who was shot at Bronkhorst Spruit on December 20th, 1880. Our brave fellows were shot down, after a "two minutes' ultimatum," before they had time to get their rifles. They were unaware that they were in an enemy's country, and had marched into a deliberately planned ambush, and although some may argue that Colonel Anstruther was indiscreet in not heeding the warnings sent to him, that revolver in Pretoria stands a mute witness to an incident which we all wish we could forget.

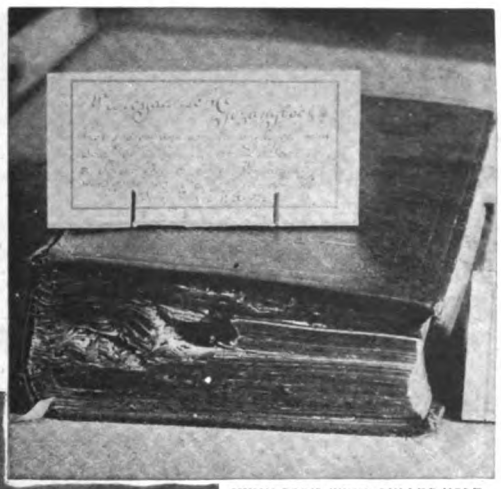
Next to Bronkhorst Spruit, Potchefstroom stands out a name of sorrow in the dark annals of the War of Independence. Here is a hymn-book,



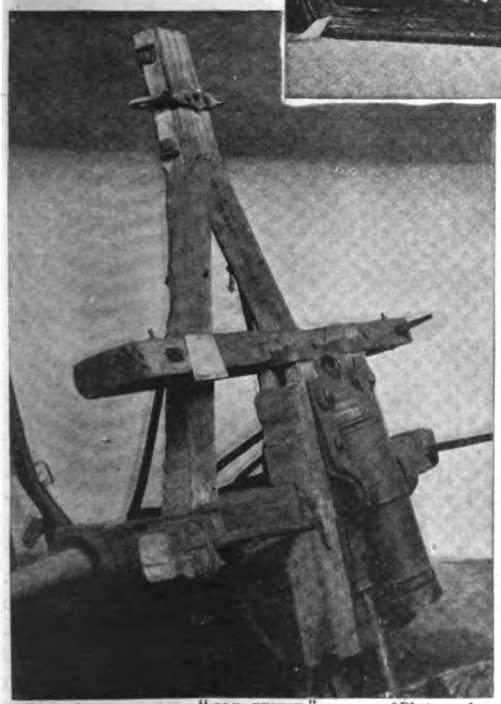
From a] COLONEL ANSTRUTHER'S REVOLVER. *[Photograph.*

showing a bullet-hole, found in a house after the siege.

At the commencement of the present war President Kruger threatened that he would "stagger humanity." At any rate he has succeeded in surprising his enemy, by the amazing excellence of the Boer artillery and the undreamed-of perfection of their arms.



HYMN-BOOK WITH BULLET-HOLE FOUND AFTER THE SIEGE OF POTCHEFSTROOM.
From a Photograph.



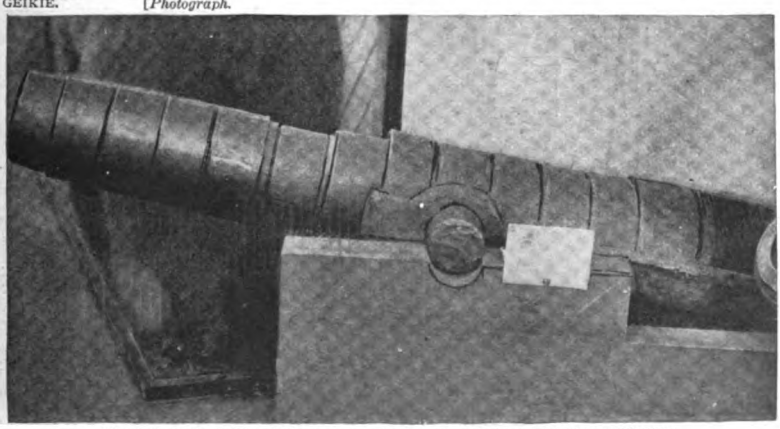
From a] "OLD GEIKIE." *[Photograph.*

It is curious to turn from accounts of the recent battles describing the latest and most perfect guns to the photographs of the old cannon used by the Boers. The one most treasured by them is "Old Geikie." It is mounted on a portion of a waggon, and was used at the siege of Potchefstroom in the war of 1881. "Every time Old Geikie was fired the recoil sent her flying backward over the waggon," said my interesting and courteous informant.

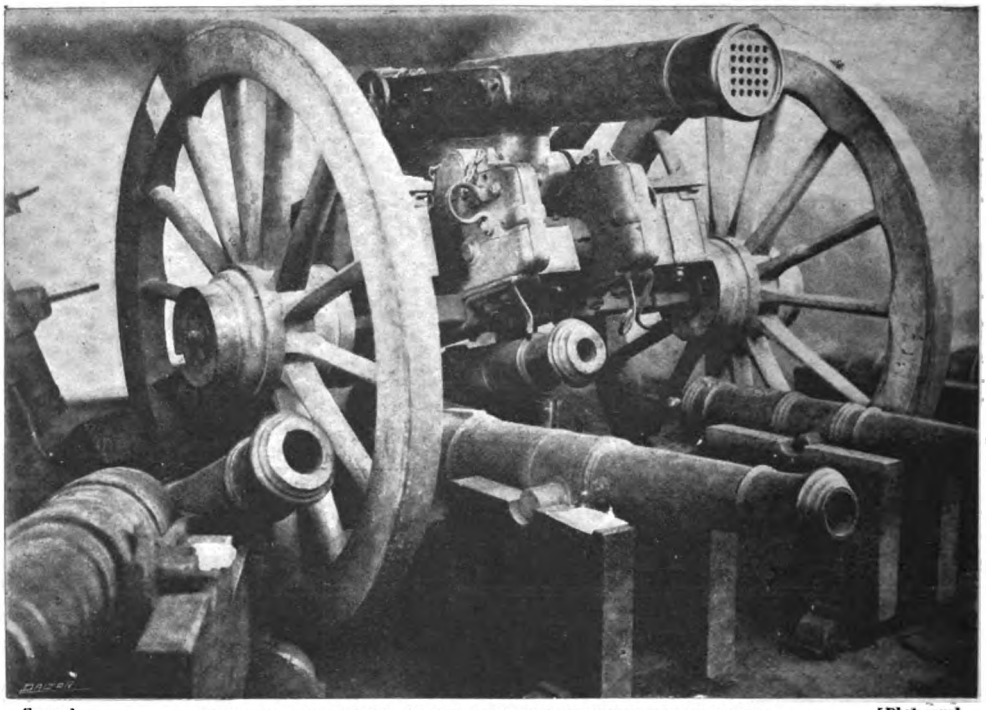
A still more wonderful witness to their military skill and ingenuity is shown in the next photograph. It is an old cannon which was actually made out of the iron bands taken from the hubs of their waggon wheels. How they managed to weld them together is a mystery, and still more mysterious is it how they succeeded in firing the extraordinary piece of artillery. But there it stands, in curious contrast to their "Long Toms" and Maxim-Nordenfelts which, while this is being written, are barking forth defiance and death at our brave troops.

The next shows a group of guns in the Museum. The large mitrailleuse was presented to President Burgers by the German Emperor in 1870. The others are on the retired list—now, we know why!

Of the wars waged by the Boers against native tribes, the most important during recent years have been those against Malaboch and Magato. The war against Malaboch was one of the most deliberate and wicked



AN OLD BOER GUN MADE OUT OF THE IRON BANDS OF WAGGON-WHEELS.
From a Photograph.



From a] GROUP OF CANNON USED BY THE BOERS BEFORE THEIR RECENT ARMING. *[Photograph.*

injustice, both in its instigation and in its conduct. Many a Britisher felt his blood boil with indignation over the affair. Only those on the spot could rightly measure the iniquity of it.

Here are the war-drums captured from Malaboch and Magato. The former, by the way, is supposed to be still languishing in Pretoria Gaol, or was, at the commencement of the war.

Transvaal and Free State money is not of much value at this moment. Thirty odd years ago the Treasury must have been in a bad way, judging from the paper money — "papier-geld"— shown opposite. A bank-note for sixpence and "Good Fors" of the Orange Free State for threepence are among the treasured mementos of those pre-Rand days — before the Uitlanders' enterprise swelled the coffers and disturbed the Arcadian peace of Pretoria or Potchefstroom.

In June, 1795, an expedition from the English Government cast anchor in Simon's Bay, and presented a mandate to the authorities of the Dutch East India Company demanding a surrender of the garrison and forts at Cape Town. There was considerable delay and some diplomacy to be got through, but after one or two half-hearted engagements, in which the Dutch were driven back from Muizenburg to Wynberg, they capitulated, and on September 16th, 1795, the Dutch troops marched out of the quaint old Castle in

From a] WAR-DRUMS OF MALABOCH AND MAGATO. *[Photograph.*

Cape Town with drums beating and colours flying, and laid down their arms to the British, and thus ended the rule of the Dutch East India Company in South Africa, after an occupation of 143 years.

BOER PAPER MONEY OF THIRTY YEARS AGO. *From a]* [*Photograph.*

It is curious to us to-day, engaged, as we are, in repeating history as well as making it, to turn to a letter written in the year 1795 by one of the sturdy old stadholders to his "Dear and much-beloved vrow," residing near Swellendam. The opening words might have been written to-day from Pretoria to Krugersdorp. Says the plucky old warrior:—

"We live in a critical time. The English have sent a demand for surrender, but the old Governor has replied that he will not do it . . . . . so we think that nothing will come of it but a bloody fight. It is well known that the General left this morning with one of his officers for the bay — Simon's Bay. Now we expect fighting every moment."

Then after a few other particulars of the prospective campaign the father pushes the warrior aside: "Take good care of our children as a mother in case I may not come back . . . . ."

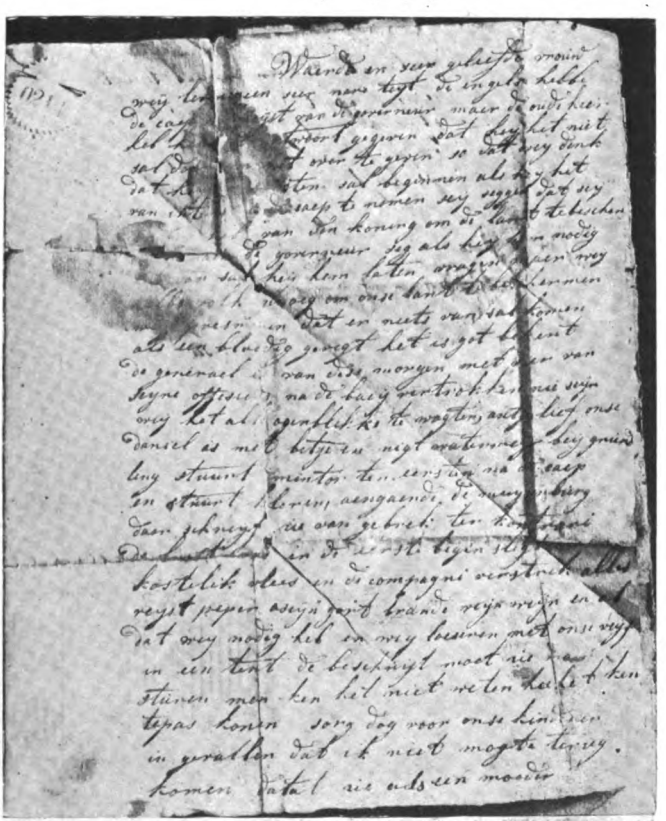
Was he an Absent-Minded Beggar?

How often, during the hundred odd years since that pathetic epistle, now crumpled and yellowed, was written, have the stolid antipathies and dogged resistances of it recurred, smouldering under conventions and treaties—only now to burst into a flame which is devastating the sunny land of the South!

When will that flame be extinguished? Will blood quench it?

Just at this moment, however, we may state that the clever and courteous Dr. Gunning, whose appeal heads this article, is busy with new duties. He has been placed in charge of the British prisoners of war in Pretoria. The unconscious humour, the grim irony of it—to hand over British soldiers to the Hollander Superintendent of the Pretoria Museum!

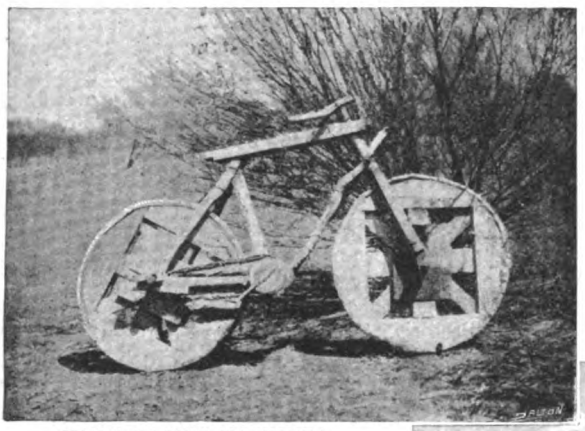
But not for long.



From a] LETTER FROM A BOER TO HIS WIFE, WRITTEN IN 1795. [*Photograph.*

*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

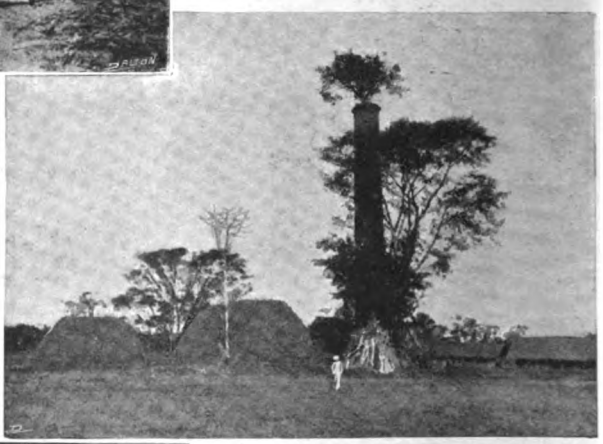


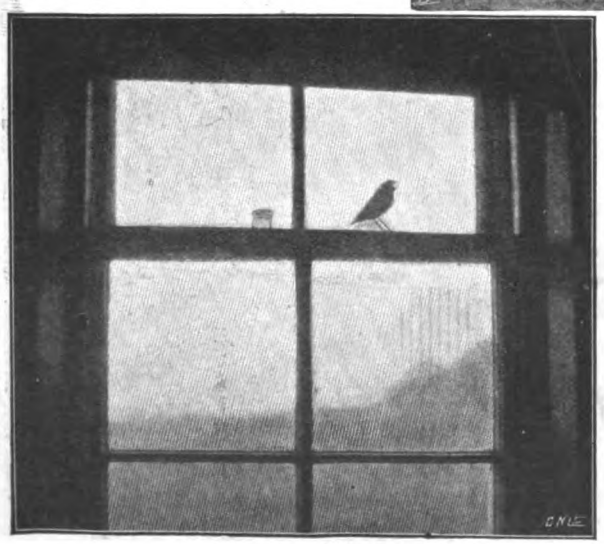
NOT A RACING MACHINE!

We are indebted to Mr. G. B. Dunsford, of Bummers Creek, Western Australia, for the accompanying photograph. He says: "This bicycle was made by a dryblower, who goes by the name of 'Mulga Bill.' He has travelled many hundreds of miles over this arid country, and made the bicycle from the material available as follows: the forks are made of mulga, the wheels from old boxes, the tyres are old meat tins, the chain is made of bullock hide interlaced with spaces to catch the cogs of the sprocket. The speed attained on this ingenious contrivance is not great, but it is undoubtedly an example of that determined pluck so characteristic of the dryblower, who has prospected this country in the face of almost insuperable difficulties, the greatest of all being, as stated by Carnegie in his 'Spinnifex and Sand,' 'the battle for water.'"

RIGHT THROUGH THE CHIMNEY!

The next photograph is not that of a small bush growing on the summit of a high pillar. The pillar is the chimney-stack of an old, disused mill standing near Moulmein, in Burma. A tree having started to grow inside evidently found the air somewhat scarce, and seeing no other way out of the difficulty—or the chimney—proceeded to grow a long trunk, which enabled it to spread its branches in the purer atmosphere above. This curious photograph was taken by Captain Robertson, B.I.S.S. *India*.





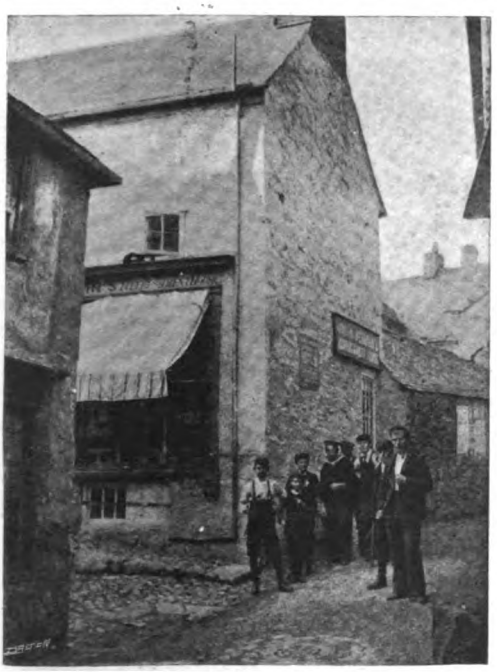
A CLEVER LITTLE ROBIN.

We have heard many a pretty story of bird life, but none prettier than that of the wee robin shown in the photograph sent to us by Mr. William Gibson, of Kilchattan, Luing, by Oban, who gives the following interesting particulars. He says: "My little robin came into the kitchen in October, 1898, and made it its home more or less till the month of March following, always sleeping in the house at night. It went away all summer, but came back last September. It goes out often through the day, but always comes in to feed, and sleeps in at night. You will see from the photo. that it was singing when taken."

* Copyright, 1900, by Geo. Newnes, Limited.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF COAL-GAS.

The house depicted in the photograph produced below is situated in Redruth, Cornwall. It was in this identical house that William Murdoch, in 1792, brought to light a discovery that was destined to completely revolutionize the then existing means of illumination—to wit, coal-gas. Fixed to one



of the walls is an iron plate bearing the following inscription: "William Murdoch lived in this house 1782 to 1798. Made his first locomotive here and tested it in 1784. Invented gas-lighting and used it in this house 1792." The interesting photo. was sent us by Mr. E. A. Couch, 26, Church Street, Bridgwater, Som.

A SHEEP THAT FOLLOWS THE HOUNDS.

The next photograph is that of a sheep whose great ambition in life is to follow the hounds, with which it almost entirely lives. The hounds and sheep are to be seen together in the stables of Mr. Walter Winans, Surrenden Park, Pluckley, Kent. On occasions, when a drag hunt is held, the sheep will follow its canine friends as far as possible, and will not stop until quite exhausted. There is another thing it aspires to, but which, despite almost heroic efforts, it is as yet unable to accomplish, and that is the hound's bay. Photo. sent by Mrs. A. Penfold, 100, High Street, Ashford, Kent.

TELEPHOTOGRAPHY REVERSED.

Readers of *The King*, the magnificently illustrated weekly paper which has recently made its appearance, are familiar with its correspondent's remarkable telephotographs taken at the seat of war. The accompanying photo. sent by Mr. W. P. Robertson is also a telephotograph, but in this instance the photo. has been taken through the wrong end of the telescope, with the result that the picture is very much reduced in size,

and the spire appears as though it were some miles distant, while, in reality, it was only about 80yds. to 100yds. away from the camera. Mr. Robertson says: "Some time ago there appeared in your Magazine a photo. of a ship and tug taken through a telescope at a distance of about two miles. The inclosed photo. is the converse of that; it represents a church at a distance of about 80yds. to 100yds.; it is taken through a telescope 'wrong-way-on.' A better idea of the amount it is diminished will be gathered from the fact that I have often taken a photo. in the ordinary way from the same position, and it just nicely fills a ¼-plate."

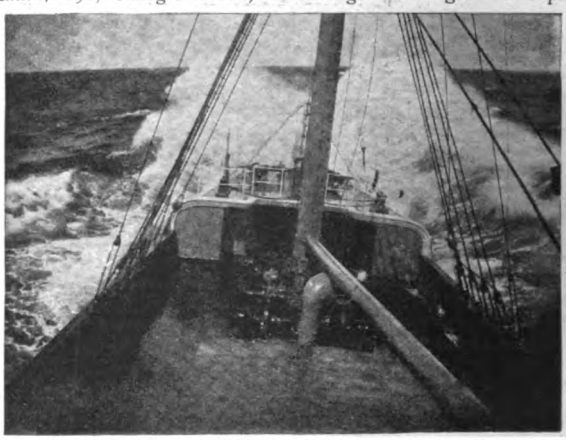
AN UNCANNY STORY.

In sending these photographs Mr. W. J. Roberts, of Iredale's Library, Torquay, says: "Some weeks ago a friend of mine was walking up the Babbacombe Road in this town, accompanied by his little terrier. When about half-way up they came upon some navvies excavating the road for electric lighting purposes. The dog made a dash at their stone heap, and selecting a stone, carried it home. It weighed over a pound, and, partly because of its unwieldiness, and partly because the dog had never done

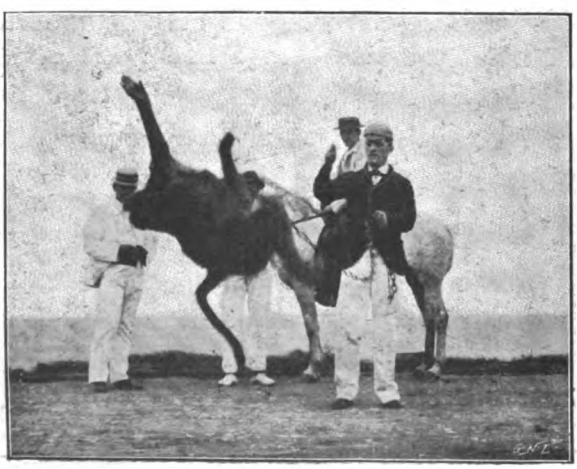
any stone-carrying before, it was placed on the mantelpiece of one of the rooms as a little trophy. About a week after, whilst walking in Torwood Street—the lower half of the Babbacombe Road—at a distance of half a mile from the above-mentioned spot, my friend and his dog came upon another set of navvies engaged in the same way as before. Here again the dog darted into the road, and again singled out a stone from the heap and carried it home. This also was placed on the mantelpiece, and the incidents forgotten until some days after, when a friend, struck by these incongruous ornaments, asked for an explanation, when the incidents were related to him as above. In handling them he unconsciously brought them together, and, lo! they became as one stone: each little splinter and crack fitting tightly and well together, with the result as shown in the photo., where just the evidence of a crack is visible. I think you will agree that this is an uncanny story, but I assure you that it is a perfectly truthful narrative."

IN A HEAVY SEA.

This is a snap-shot taken from the bridge of a cargo vessel crossing the Bay of Biscay, and forcibly demonstrates the heavy nature of the seas she encountered. She was a steamer of about 800 tons, with a cargo of iron ore from Elba, which made her labour heavily and caused her to ship immense volumes of water at every plunge. In the photograph here reproduced—which was sent by Mr. George Lamb, 198, Georgie Road, Edinburgh—one gets a capital



idea of the stolid way the good ship forged ahead, "let the seas rage high as they choose."



A SPRIGHTLY BABOON.

The accompanying snap-shot is that of a huge baboon in the act of turning a somersault backwards, on the beach at East London, South Africa. The wily organ-grinder who first introduces one of these big fellows in place of the wee creatures now so popular may safely look forward to a rich harvest of coins at the hands of younger Britain. We are indebted to Mr. R. Coulter, of 21, Princes Street, London Road, S.E., for this photograph.

THE EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS.

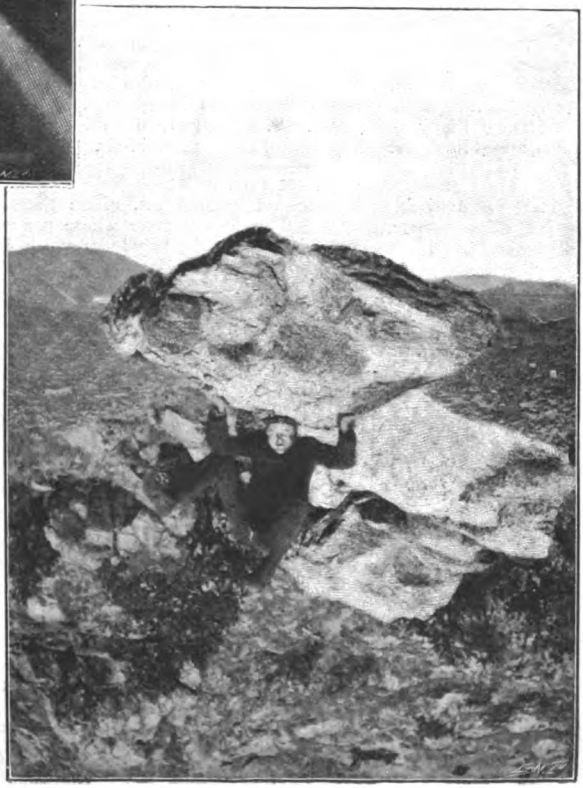
A well-known florist, of Bronx Borough, New York, has given up his leisure time to the study of artistic designs in flowers and plants. Here is an excellent example of this clever gardener's work, who has laid out a facsimile in miniature of the Empire State Express. The design is so perfect that it has attracted widespread attention from thousands who pass every day on the trains entering the great Metropolis from the northern suburbs. The photograph was kindly sent by Miss Varran Brose, of Mount Vernon, N.Y.

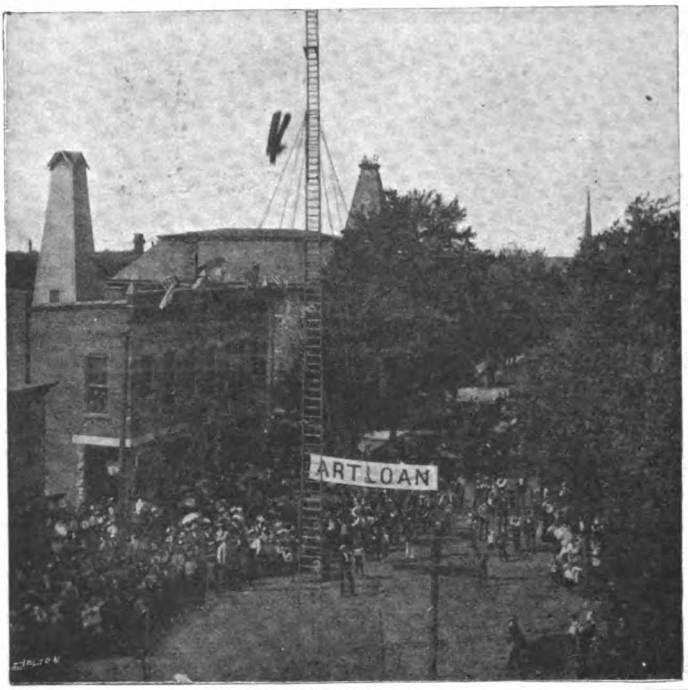
AT THE TOP OF THE LADDER.

Mr. W. George Furniss, of Waterloo Wharf, Epsom, has repeatedly "tried" for a place in our Curiosity columns. He says he has been disappointed many a time, but adds, in his letter, that his motto has been to "Try, try, try again." We are pleased to be able to encourage this young devotee of the camera by reproducing this extraordinary photograph of a boy who "has reached the top of the ladder" at a very early age; nor does the young man look particularly displeased with himself! In order to obtain this curious effect the camera was, of course, placed on the ground lens upwards.

ATLAS II.

Mr. Harry S. Lumsden, of 18, Bon Accord Crescent, Aberdeen, sends this curious photo., which was taken in South Africa, within a few miles of Johannesburg, on the North Road Reef, Wilgespruit, Transvaal. The mine was discovered by the present owners, Messrs. Percy G. Shepherd and Geo. Ross, who have been fortunate in having large quantities of gold taken from it, but since the war all mining operations had to be given up. The photo. is really a clever illusion. The boy is shown as if he were carrying away from the mine, on his head, a large piece of rock containing visible gold, while the prospector really stood upon his head on a large rock, the weight of his body producing the expression of countenance similar to that seen when a person carries a weight on his head. The photo. was taken by Mr. Thos. Fowles.



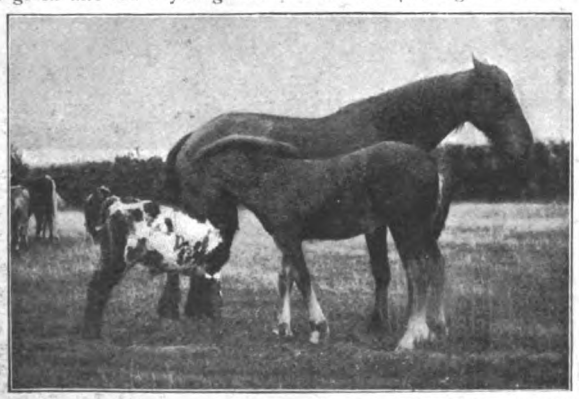


A DIVE ON DRY LAND.

Street fairs have for some years become all the rage throughout the States. Whenever a street fair is arranged to take place the entire population for miles around make it a holiday for the time being. Showmen naturally vie with each other, and the man with the biggest sensation or catch-your-breath-for-a-dime show naturally scores heavily. We reproduce here a snap-shot of the amazing performance of one Bertram Collins, who between meals spends his time in occasional dives from a ladder 100ft. high into a net near the ground. Mr. W. R. Tilton, of Prairie Depôt, Ohio, sends this clever snap-shot of Collins in mid-air.

CAUGHT IN THE ACT!

Here is an amusing instance of friendliness, abuse thereof, and swift punishment also. The kindly mare whose portrait is given allowed a young calf to share the privileges which are



usually reserved for the direct offspring. The heir-apparent, however, has suddenly come upon the scene and seized the offender by the neck. This is only as it should be, but it is not always easy to obtain such excellent photographic records of the actual events as that obtained in this case by Mr. J. A. Cunningham, of 2, Seaview Terrace, Ailesbury Road, Dublin.

A FAIR ADMIRER OF "THE STRAND."

We are very proud to find that THE STRAND has been chosen as a fitting subject for a fancy dress, and we are glad to hear that the pretty lady has met with great success and was very much admired. Miss Lily A. Whitelaw, the artist who designed this novel costume, very kindly sends a few details, which we have much pleasure in quoting: "The dress was made of silk of exactly the same shade as the covers, and painted in dark blue. The front panel can be plainly seen in the photograph, and the back of the bodice had the advertisements of Pears and Cadbury, which appeared on the back of THE STRAND for November, 1899, the month in which the dress was worn in Edinburgh. She wore in her hair two miniature telegraph poles, from which were suspended in silver, 'THE STRAND MAGAZINE,' cut out in exactly the same shape as those on the front of the dress, as was also the 'Sixpence' on the bodice." The photo. was taken by Horsburgh, Edinburgh.

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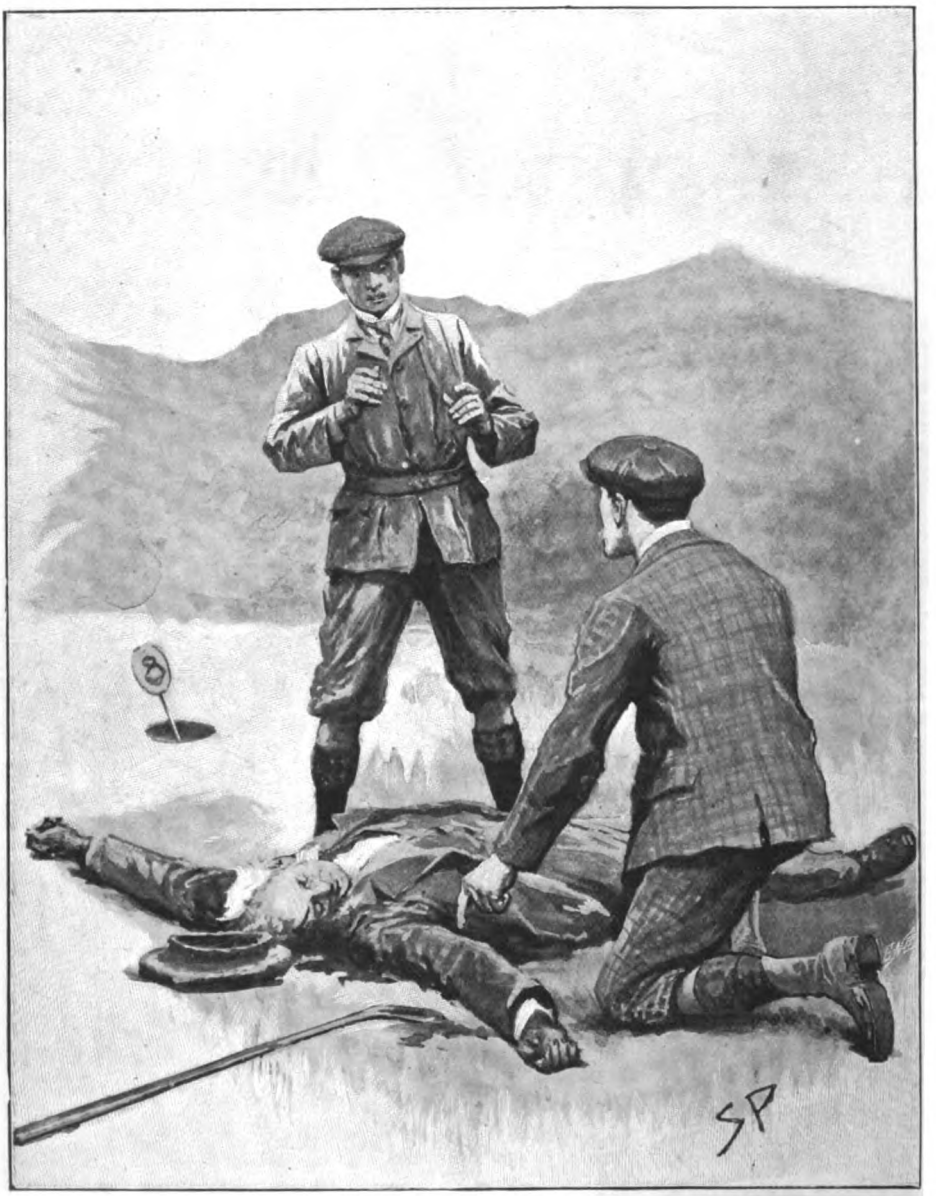

"'IT'S A CASE OF MURDER, I'M AFRAID,' SAID HERIOT."

(*See page* 483.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xix. MAY, 1900. No. 113.

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ASTOR, LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

Within an Ace.

By Maud Coleborn.

I.

"FORE! Fo-re!" The sound rang out across the autumn stillness and echoed among the hills that towered round the little golf course at Strathcona.

"Looks rather as though the old chap had taken root, doesn't it?" said Dicky Anderson, with a good-natured laugh. But his companion, a tall, sunburnt man, was silent, gazing intently under his upraised hand at the smooth little patch of turf that marked the next putting green. "Oh, confound it all, this is really too slow. I say, Heriot, suppose I take a pot-shot at the old chap just by way of waking him up, eh? He shouldn't attempt to play golf, unless——" Something in the expression of his companion's face brought the sentence to an abrupt conclusion. Then without a word the two men threw down their clubs and strode rapidly across the course.

Before long the walk developed into a run, and in another moment they were beside a figure stretched motionless on the smooth green turf.

"He's not dead, is he?" said Dicky Anderson, in a horror-stricken whisper. Jack Heriot nodded gravely. "My God, how awful!" as his companion pointed to a thin red stream that welled slowly from a deep wound in the man's temple. "But how on earth could it have happened?"

"It's a case of murder, I'm afraid," said Heriot, as he stooped to examine an iron-headed golf club lying on the grass at his feet. "Look at that, Dicky," pointing as he spoke to the blood-stained metal.

"It's wet!" said Dicky Anderson, with a shudder; then, his freckled face pale with excitement, "Come on, Heriot," he said; "we must give information about this poor chap's death at once. The steamer calls at 12·30, and——"

"It's just twenty minutes past now," said Heriot, replacing his watch. "I'm afraid it's only an off-chance our catching her, but we can try, at any rate."

As the two men raced down the moorland path that led from the golf links to the village, Dicky Anderson found some difficulty in keeping up with his companion's swinging stride, but he ran on valiantly till a sudden turn in the road brought them in sight of the blue waters of the bay.

"Oh, confound it, the boat has left the pier already!" exclaimed Dicky, as he threw himself, panting, on a patch of heather and pointed to a thick streak of smoke that streamed across the sky.

"I was afraid we couldn't do it," said his companion, quietly. "It's an awful pity, because it gives the murderer at least some hours' start."

"If only there were a wire from here to the mainland we could have that red-headed chap arrested on landing," suggested Dicky.

"But, Anderson, there's not a particle of evidence."

"I know; but, evidence or no evidence, I'll take my oath that villainous-looking chap we met coming away from the golf course is the guilty man."

"He certainly had a peculiar face," assented Heriot, "and looked——"

"Like a cursed scoundrel," supplemented Dicky. "Precisely my opinion, old chap."

An hour later the local authorities of Strathcona were busy collecting information about the mysterious murder. Very little was known of either the murdered man or his companion. The two men had arrived at Strathcona a few days previously; had put

up at the one hotel in the village; and the younger of the two had entered their names in the visitors' book as "F. and S. Johnson." They were evidently both enthusiastic golfers, and on the morning of the murder had started as usual for the golf links.

An hour later the younger man returned alone just in time to catch the steamer for the mainland. Being questioned, the landlord of the Strathcona Arms said the gentleman had taken no luggage except a small handbag, which, he explained, would suffice for the one night which he expected to be away from Strathcona. Yes, he had noticed that the murdered man's luggage was covered with labels of various hotels and railway stations, both English and foreign. He supposed the labels must have been removed, since there was no trace of them on the luggage then in the hands of the police. Nor did the contents of the murdered man's pockets or portmanteau give the least clue either to his own identity or that of his travelling companion.

There were no letters or papers of any kind, unless one could count a very faded photograph representing a little girl in short frocks with a fleece of brown hair curling about her shoulders, which had slipped between the lining of the murdered man's hat-box. The photograph was evidently a cheap seaside production, and did not bear the photographer's name.

As the weeks flew by and no further information could be obtained leading to the identification of either of the two men, the mysterious murder in the Scottish Highlands passed from a nine days' wonder into the category of undiscovered crimes, and was speedily forgotten.

II.

"I'm uncommonly glad to see you, Dicky!"

"Same to you, Heriot, old chap!"

The two men clasped each other's hands in silence for a moment, and it was evident that the five years that intervened between their parting in England and their meeting at an up-country Australian station had done little to mar their close friendship.

True, those same years had changed the silent and diffident Jack Heriot into a stalwart, self-reliant man of the world, but they were seemingly powerless to make any change in Dicky Anderson, whose good-natured face was as freckled and boyish as ever, and the laugh with which he greeted Heriot's astonished—"By Jove, Dicky, that's not all your luggage, is it?" was as cheery as of old.

"Rather not, old man; I don't travel, as a rule, with two saratogas and a bonnet-box!"

"Then how on earth did you——"

"It belongs to a lady," said Dicky, coolly; "there was no one to meet her, so I saw to her traps and took charge of her extremely pretty little self. She is going on to a place called Murray's Corner, and——"

"Murray's Corner!" repeated Heriot, in tones of absolute amazement. "Impossible! No one lives at Murray's Corner except an old curmudgeon, named Forrester. He is unmarried, sees no one, and is——"

"My pretty travelling companion's uncle," supplemented Dicky, with a grin. "By the way, he was to have been down here to meet her, and drive her over to his homestead."

"Then he hasn't come, Dicky, for there's nothing but my own mare in the hotel stables."

"By Jove, Heriot, what on earth will the poor girl do? She can't possibly put up in that shanty," pointing to the ramshackle building dignified by the name of hotel, with its verandas filled with up-country stockmen and loungers of all sorts.

"Out of the question," Heriot was beginning, when he was interrupted by a quiet voice.

"Oh, please, Mr. Anderson, have you any idea whether my uncle has arrived?" And a dainty vision in a white gown and sun-hat appeared at Anderson's elbow, and gazed in appealing anxiety in Dicky's freckled countenance.

"I'm afraid he hasn't come yet, Miss Forrester; at least, my friend Heriot says he hasn't seen anything of him."

Dicky's informal introduction of his friend was acknowledged by the girl with a grave little bow.

"Then you know my uncle?" she said, and there was a decided ring of anxiety in her quiet voice.

"Well—er—er, I'm afraid I can't say I know him very well; he has the next homestead to mine, certainly, but it's about ten miles further up-country, and, of course——"

"Ten miles!" echoed the girl, in evident consternation; "then how far is it from here, please?"

"About twenty-two miles, or thereabouts."

"Do you think I could hire a dog-cart to take me to Murray's Corner?" said the girl, anxiously. "I don't think I should care to stay at the hotel," with a little glance of distaste at the group of rough-looking loungers.

"Oh, no, that would be quite out of the

question," said Heriot, hastily; "but don't be anxious, Miss Forrester—you must come and have a cup of tea, and if your uncle does not turn up, Anderson and I will manage about driving you over."

Half an hour later Dicky Anderson and Jack Heriot were standing in the rear of the hotel in earnest consultation.

"'THEN YOU KNOW MY UNCLE?' SHE SAID."

"I think that's about the best thing we can do, don't you, Dicky?—unless, of course, you would care to drive the lady yourself."

"That goes without saying, old man; but not behind that wicked-looking chestnut, thank you," said Dicky, decidedly.

"Oh, Firefly is as steady as old Time, if you know the way to take her," said her master, stroking the mare's glossy neck affectionately.

"I daresay, but I think on the whole I prefer the hotel shandrydan with that hammer-headed old roan between the shafts. As long as he can get over the ground——"

"Oh, yes, he can do that all right; but, confound it, I wish the buggy held three!"

"So do I," said Dicky, ruefully. "However, never mind, old chap; I couldn't drive Miss Forrester any way, because I shouldn't know the way from Murray's Corner to your place. I'll go on with the luggage as arranged, and I'll expect you any time between this and midnight. It will take you all your time to do the—what is it?—thirty miles?"

"No—no, twenty-seven or twenty-eight, at the outside, if I go round by Blue Point. Besides, Firefly goes like the wind, so be sure and tell Mrs. Patterson to have a good supper ready by about eleven o'clock. And—er—Dicky, you are good at all that sort of thing, so be sure and make it all right with the little girl yonder. Let her under-

stand that distances don't count in Australia, and that it is nothing out of the way for me to drive her over; and—and—oh, you know what I mean, don't you, old chap?"

"Yes," said Dicky, with a grin, "I think I understand."

It was like a dream to Helen Forrester to be driving for the first time through the bush, alone with this bronzed stranger, whose square chin and steady eyes were so full of quiet strength. It was a face to be trusted, the girl decided instinctively, and perhaps that accounted for the ease with which she was able to talk to Jack Heriot, as though she had known him years instead of hours.

"And you say it is five years since you have seen your uncle? I daresay you are prepared for his being—er—er—rather changed?"

"HE NEVER EVEN CAME TO SAY GOOD-BYE."

"Changed!" echoed the girl, sadly; "yes, there is no doubt about that. When he came to see me at school he was the dearest, cheeriest old uncle you could possibly imagine. All the girls fell in love with him on the spot, and quite envied me the prospect of going to keep house for him at Summerdale. That was the name of the lovely old manor-house in Warwickshire that Uncle George had decided to buy. You see, though he had lived most of his life in Australia, he declared the old country was, after all, the best place to end one's days in. Then suddenly, while Uncle George was in Scotland, I had a letter saying he had changed his mind and had resolved to return to Australia."

"And did he give you no reason for his change of plan?"

"He never even came to say good-bye," said the girl, with a suspicion of tears in her quiet voice; "and—and—somehow he seemed to change all at once. Instead of his usual kind letters he sent me the shortest little notes in which he seemed to be trying to be affectionate. At first I could not understand it at all, and then I came to the conclusion he must be ill. I begged him to let me come out to Australia, but he said I must finish my education first. That was four years ago, but this year I made up my mind I would come out and take care of him with or without his permission."

"But you don't mean to say you came to this decision without consulting your other relatives, Miss Forrester?"

"Uncle George is the only near relative I have in the world," said the girl, sadly, "and I knew that he was so un-

selfish that, if he thought it was better for me to remain in England, he would not let me come to Murray's Corner however much he might want me. Of course, I knew it would be all right when I was here ——"

"Then you mean to say Mr. Forrester had no idea you were coming to Australia?" said Jack Heriot, in some amazement.

"Not until I had actually landed. I came out with a school-friend and her mother as far as Sydney, and then I wired to Uncle George to meet me. Of course I knew it would be all right; but perhaps it was rather stupid of me not to think that perhaps he would not get the telegram at once. However," she continued, gaily, "all's well that ends well, and when Uncle George hears how kind both you and Mr. Anderson have been to me, he will be as grateful to you both as—as I am," she added, with a little glance from her grey eyes that made Jack Heriot wish that the gables of Murray's Corner just then appearing in sight were a hundred miles away instead of two.

"Is that really Murray's Corner—already?" said the girl; then something in the expression of her companion's face made her add, hastily: "You see, your horse goes so quickly that I could hardly realize we had come so many miles."

"Nor I," said Heriot, quietly, as he caught himself reflecting that grey was certainly the prettiest colour for a woman's eyes.

In another moment the buggy was drawn up in front of the entrance of Murray's Corner. The house looked inhospitable enough, with its closed doors and curtainless windows, and Jack Heriot had to knock several times before the door was opened by an elderly woman of somewhat slatternly appearance.

"Is it the masther you're wanting, sorr?" she said, in the strong brogue of County Cork. "Shure and he's away in Sydney for a couple of days."

"Uncle George away?" stammered Helen Forrester; "then he didn't get my telegram?"

"'IS IT THE MASTHER YOU'RE WANTING?' SHE SAID."

"Divil a bit, miss. It's lyin' on the dining-room mantelpiece this moment."

"But — but — I'm his niece, Helen Forrester, you know. I suppose my room——"

"Oh, Mrs. Sullivan will see to that, I'm sure," said Heriot, slipping something into the woman's palm.

"Shure and everything will be ready in

the south room directly, miss, if ye'll just walk into the dining-room while I get ye a bit of supper. Ye'll be afther wanting something too, sorr, after your long drive, and—Mike, ye spalpeen, see to the gentleman's horse," she added, in an audible aside.

Under pretence of seeing Firefly attended to himself, Jack Heriot followed Mrs. Sullivan into the kitchen, where the Irishwoman was already beginning rapid preparations for supper.

"Are you quite sure your master didn't expect Miss Forrester?" he questioned, anxiously.

"Divil a bit, sorr; lasteways, he said nothing to me about it; but then the masther's not one to kill himself wid talkin'."

"No, I suppose not," said Heriot; "though I believe he is very fond of his niece."

"Shure and she's the sort of young lady that wouldn't make that a very difficult task, I'm thinkin'," said the Irishwoman, with a shrewd glance at Heriot that made his bronzed cheek flush a little as he said, laughing:—

"I'm sure she has fallen into good hands, and that you will look after her till Mr. Forrester's return."

"I'll do that, sorr, never fear," said the Irishwoman; "for she's a swate young creature, and that's a fact."

This was a sentiment which Jack Heriot most heartily indorsed, as he stood beside the white-gowned figure an hour later waiting for Firefly to be brought round.

"This is not good-bye, but *au revoir*," said the girl, holding out her hand. "When Uncle George comes home he will be able to thank both you and Mr. Anderson for all your kindness far, far better than I could hope to do."

"I doubt it," said Heriot, looking down at the little hand lying in his broad palm, and which he seemed quite to have forgotten to restore to its owner.

"Oh, but you don't know Uncle George," said the girl, gently withdrawing her hand; "he's the dearest, kindest old man in the world."

"Then you are not afraid to remain here all alone?"

"Oh, no," said the girl, gaily; "it's only for two days, and besides, you forget Mrs. Sullivan: I'm sure she's a dear, kind old soul."

"Yes, I believe she is; but if you should be in any trouble or difficulty, just send one of the men over to Heriot's Ford—that's the name of my homestead, you know—and either Anderson or I will ride over."

"Thank you," said the girl, simply; then she added, with a little laugh, "but Uncle George will be home in a couple of days, you know, and then—oh, well, perhaps I had better confess it at once: he spoils me dreadfully."

"I don't wonder at it," said Heriot, audaciously, with a look that sent a quick wave of colour into the girl's cheeks.

Five minutes later he was seated behind Firefly straining his eyes to catch a last glimpse of the slender, white-gowned figure that looked so strangely out of place on the threshold of Murray's Corner.

III.

"A PENNY for your thoughts, old man."

No answer.

"Twopence—sixpence. Come, I'm sure that's an offer——"

"Which only a comparative millionaire like yourself, Dicky, would dream of offering for an absolutely valueless commodity."

"Comparative millionaire yourself," said Dicky.

"I wish I were," answered Heriot, with something that sounded suspiciously like a sigh.

"Rubbish, old chap; you know you wouldn't exchange your life here, with everything that a reasonable man can want, for all the so-called pleasures of my globe-trotting existence."

"Perhaps not, Dicky; still, there are some things a man might like. By the way, I suppose you rode over to Murray's Corner?"

Dicky nodded.

"Any news of Forrester's return?"

"Nothing; except a line to Mrs. Sullivan, giving no address, but saying he would probably be back before the end of the week. By Jove, Heriot, I feel awfully sorry for that little girl. She's been in that dismal hole for a whole week now, with nothing to look forward to but the return of that precious uncle. I can't help thinking she's in for rather a big dose of disappointment, if Uncle George is anything like the flattering portrait you have drawn of him."

"He certainly is a surly beggar enough," said Heriot, thoughtfully, "but he must be fond of the little girl. In fact, I hardly see——"

"How any fellow could help it, eh, old man?" said Dicky, with a quick glance at his friend's face outlined against the thick foliage that covered the veranda.

The two men smoked in silence for a few moments, broken only by those mysterious night sounds that haunt the Australian bush.

"By the way, don't you think you could ride over to-morrow to Murray's Corner with that packet of magazines I got by the Europe mail?" continued Dicky. "Of course Miss Forrester appreciated my visit yesterday; but I fancy she could do with a little variety in the person of the visitor. You needn't blush, old chap; of course I don't profess to have a look in when it is a case of Heriot, Dicky Anderson, and a woman," and the laugh with which Dicky pointed this sally was perhaps not quite as mirthful as usual.

"Don't be an ass, Dicky," said Jack Heriot, quietly, "as if—by Jove! What is that? Sounds uncommonly like a horse," and Jack Heriot sprang to his feet and listened intently, his blue eyes fixed on the little strip of road visible from the veranda.

"I can't hear anything," said Dicky, lazily. "What a restless beggar you are, Heriot; why can't you smoke your pipe in peace like—— by Jove, it is a horse, though! I wonder who can be riding through the bush at this time of night, especially at such a pace. Good heavens, Heriot, it's a woman!" as the horse came tearing down the strip of moonlit road and revealed a woman's fluttering skirts.

But Jack Heriot was already out of ear-shot. Dicky saw him seize the horse's bridle and hold out his arms, and in another moment he was mounting the veranda steps, one arm supporting a girl, who seemed half-fainting with fatigue. Her hair was loose, and fell in thick masses round her shoulders, and the grey eyes were dilated with terror as she sank with a little, choking cry into the nearest chair.

"Good heavens, Miss Forrester, what is the matter?" Dicky was beginning, when he was interrupted by Heriot's imperious—

"Fetch some brandy, Dicky, and don't talk."

The girl lay back in her chair, looking very tired and white, and as Heriot stooped

"HERIOT STOOPED TO ARRANGE A CUSHION BEHIND HER HEAD."

to arrange a cushion behind her head a little wandering night breeze blew a tress of her brown hair across his lips. For a moment the man's strong hand trembled like a woman's, but the voice in which he bade her drink the contents of the glass Dicky had procured was as quiet and steady as usual.

"I can't! I really can't!" the girl was beginning, when something in the expression of Heriot's face made her take the glass and drink its contents, with the docility of a child.

"That's right," said Dicky, approvingly. "Now, Miss Forrester, you can tell us all about it. Has Mr. Forrester come back from Sydney yet?"

"Yes," said the girl, in a tense, low voice; "the man who calls himself Forrester of Murray's Corner returned to-day."

"Calls himself Forrester?" repeated Heriot and Dicky Anderson, simultaneously; "then you mean——"

"That he is not Uncle George at all; that he is a stranger, an impostor, who for some purpose of his own has been masquerading in his letters to me as Uncle George."

"But are you sure there is no mistake, Miss Forrester?" said Heriot.

"Quite sure," said the girl; "but I will tell you about it," she added, trying hard to suppress the tremor in her voice. "This afternoon Mrs. Sullivan received a telegram saying her master was returning to-night, but that she need not send to meet him, as he was bringing a new horse from Sydney, which he would ride home. I made up my mind that it would be delightful to go as far as Blue Point and meet Uncle George myself. So I got Mike to saddle Uncle George's bay and set off."

"Alone?" interposed Heriot, anxiously.

"Oh, yes; I knew my way to Blue Point, having gone several times with Mike."

"But Forrester's bay has a mouth like——"

"Oh, yes, he pulled a great deal, but I had been taught to ride by Uncle George, so I was all right," said the girl, simply. "I had got half-way to Blue Point when I saw a man riding towards me whom I took to be Uncle George. It was very foolish of me, of course, but I waved my handkerchief and then rode as fast as I could to meet him. It was only when I was within a few yards of him that I realized that the man was a perfect stranger. He took off his hat as I came up and said something about the unexpected pleasure of meeting a lady—and—and then I saw he wasn't really a gentleman. Of course, I was annoyed with myself for having mistaken such a man for Uncle George, so I murmured something vague about having expected to meet Mr. Forrester, and was riding past him as quickly as possible, when he laid his hand on my bridle.

"'Then we are both in luck's way,' he said, 'for I am Forrester of Murray's Corner.'

"'You, you are—Mr. Forrester,' I repeated, stupidly, and I was just going to say something about Uncle George when I caught an expression on the man's face that frightened me; so I said something about having been at school with his niece, who I understood had come to live with him at Murray's Corner.

"'Ah, my niece,' he said. 'Yes, the dear little girl had some quixotic notion of coming out to cheer my solitude, but I thought it best for her to remain in Europe—for the present, at any rate. Had I known that she was possessed of such a charming friend——' and then he smiled a horrid smile that showed a scar right across his cheek and—and—well, I don't know quite what I said, but I got away, and galloped off as quickly as I could. And when I looked back he was still standing with his horse reined across the road, smiling and waving his hand. I was so afraid that he would follow me that I took the first cross-path I came to and rode on regardless of where it led me. It was only when I got to the group of blue gum trees by the spring that I recollected your having pointed it out as being the road leading to your homestead. Do you remember?" turning to Jack Heriot.

"I remember," acquiesced Heriot, quietly.

"So I rode on, following the road, but it seemed a very, very long way, and then it got dark and I was frightened, and thought I had lost my way till I caught sight of a light, and I knew I must be near a homestead, and then you came to meet me, and I knew that I was safe," concluded the girl, simply. And there was such absolute trust in her grey eyes as she looked at Heriot, that Dicky Anderson stifled a little sigh before he said, with his usual cheerfulness:—

"It was uncommonly clever of you to find your way here all alone, Miss Forrester, and you may trust Heriot and your humble servant to get to the bottom of this business. The first thing would be, of course, to find where your Uncle George is at present, and the next, to discover the reason for this chap's impersonation of him."

"I suppose you don't happen to have a photograph of your uncle?" said Heriot.

"Oh, yes, I have several; but they are in

my room at Murray's Corner, and—stay, I have a small one in this locket"—detaching it from her chain as she spoke, and laying it in Heriot's palm.

Dicky Anderson leant forward to examine the portrait, but Heriot's fingers closed over it, as he said, in a curiously even voice :—

"All right, Dicky, we can examine the portrait later; in the meantime, Miss Forrester must be awfully tired, so, if you will call one of the men to look after the horse, I will see Mrs. Patterson and ask her to prepare Miss Forrester's room."

"Good God! Heriot, it's that poor old chap who was murdered at Strathcona!"

The two men were seated in Heriot's den, the lamplight falling on Helen Forrester's locket, which lay open on the table between them.

"Then you recognise the likeness?" said Heriot, quietly.

"Likeness?" echoed Dicky Anderson. "Why, it's the poor old chap himself as we found him that day on the links at Strathcona."

"Then, if Mr. Forrester was murdered five years ago, who is the man masquerading as Miss Forester's uncle?"

"'THEN YOU RECOGNISE THE LIKENESS?' SAID HERIOT."

"The murderer?" said Dicky, concisely; "that red-headed chap."

"But the owner of Murray's Corner hasn't red hair——"

"There is such a thing as hair dye," suggested Dicky. "Anyway, black or red, beard or no beard, I'll undertake to recognise that scoundrel anywhere."

"Good," said Heriot. "But, I say, Dicky, old man, we must manage things as quietly as possible—for Helen's sake."

Dicky Anderson smiled a curious little smile at Heriot's unconscious use of the girl's Christian name, as he said, quietly, "Yes, I understand."

The pale light of dawn was just faintly visible above the horizon as Jack Heriot and Dicky Anderson saddled their horses and rode at a steady gallop down the road to Blue Point.

The two men were silent for some time, each occupied with his own thoughts and heedless of the myriad sounds of awakening life in the bush around them.

"That's your road, Dicky," said Heriot, presently; "keep straight on, and you will come to the police-station just about half a mile this side of the village. When you have got your men, ride like the dickens. The chances are that scoundrel will have got the start of us by an hour or two, and we shall need the other chaps to spread as far over the bush as possible."

"All right," said Dicky; "but, I say, old chap, it's a bit risky your going over there by yourself. I don't suppose that scoundrel would stick at anything, and——"

"Oh, I'm all right," said Heriot, coolly; "*au revoir*, Dicky," and the two men galloped away in opposite directions.

IV.

"AN' is it you, sorr? Och, thin, the saints be praised, for I've been lookin' for ye this hour an' more," said Mrs. Sullivan, as Heriot rode up to the door of Murray's Corner. "And are ye quite sure Miss Helen is safe, sorr?"

"Quite—why?"

"Och, an' it's been a terrible night," said Mrs. Sullivan, pushing back the dishevelled hair from her forehead. "When the master came home and I asked if he had met his swate niece, Miss Helen, shure ye'd have thought he was going stark staring mad. He strode up and down the room for all the world like a wild baste in a cage, swearing all the time till I was frightened out of my siven sinses. And then all at once he grew quiet and towld me to bring some food at once, and whin I brought in the thray he was busy writing a letter.

"'Tell Mike to saddle the roan at once, and give this to Mr. Heriot when he calls to-morrow,' says he, and his voice was quite quiet.

"'Shure, and ye'll not be going away again to-night, sorr?' says I; but divil a word did he answer, only he turns his eyes on me and they was blazing like live coals. I went out of the room as quickly as I could to escape the sight of them, and five, or it may be ten, minutes afther that I heard his horse gallopin' away as though the divil himself were behind him."

"And the letter?" queried Jack Heriot.

"Here it is, sorr."

Heriot tore open the envelope and hastily scanned the hurried scrawl. "You are mistaken if you suppose that the game is up," it ran. "True, you have scored one trick—or, rather, that pretty little girl has done so for herself. It only remains to be seen who is to have the rest. I flatter myself that with several good cards in the shape of most of the late Mr. Forrester's securities changed into good Bank of England notes, I have as good a chance of the odd trick as anyone. It's not the first time I have been within an ace of losing, and have won all the same. Besides, it happens to be my lead, and I flatter myself it will be a difficult one to follow."

As Heriot came to the end of this strange effusion there was the sound of horses' hoofs coming down the road. Hastily crushing the letter into his pocket he galloped to meet Anderson and his escort.

"Only three men, Dicky?" he said, sharply; "why, man alive, we shall never find him——"

"He is found already," said Dicky, quietly.

"Found?" echoed Heriot.

"Yes, at the cross roads between this and Blue Point. He must have been riding almost in a bee line for the railway when his horse fell in getting over a gully. The man must have broken his neck even before the horse rolled over him. Well, after all, it's the easiest way out of it for him, I suppose; but I wish we had some proof——"

Jack Heriot silently held out the crumpled letter.

"The scoundrel was right," said Dicky, quietly, when he had finished reading it—"he certainly chose a lead which none of us can follow—at present, at any rate."

"Jack," said Mrs. Heriot, laying down her sewing for a moment, "do you know that to-day is the 31st of October?"

"The 31st of October, is it? Well, little wife, and what then?" interrogated Heriot, lazily.

"Don't you remember, it is just seven years to-day since you rode over to Murray's Corner and found that dreadful man——"

"Try to forget it, dear," said Heriot,

"'THE SCOUNDREL WAS RIGHT,' SAID DICKY, QUIETLY."

tenderly, laying his bronzed hand for a moment on his wife's white fingers, "and think only of what the years have brought us since then. By the way, where is the chick?"

"I'm here, dad," said a clear little voice at his elbow, and little five-year-old Nell Heriot climbed on to her father's knee, laid her soft little lips for a moment to his bronzed cheek, and then slid once more to her feet.

"Well, little eel, and where are you off to now?" said Jack Heriot, laughing.

"I'm going to Uncle Dick," said the child, promptly.

"What? And leave dad all alone?"

"But Uncle Dick is a visitor," said the child, seriously; "and—and—you've got mother, you know." With which unanswerable argument the little maid trotted off.

"Uncle Dicky," said she, five minutes later, "I want to ask you a question, please. What does it mean to be 'within an ace' of anything?"

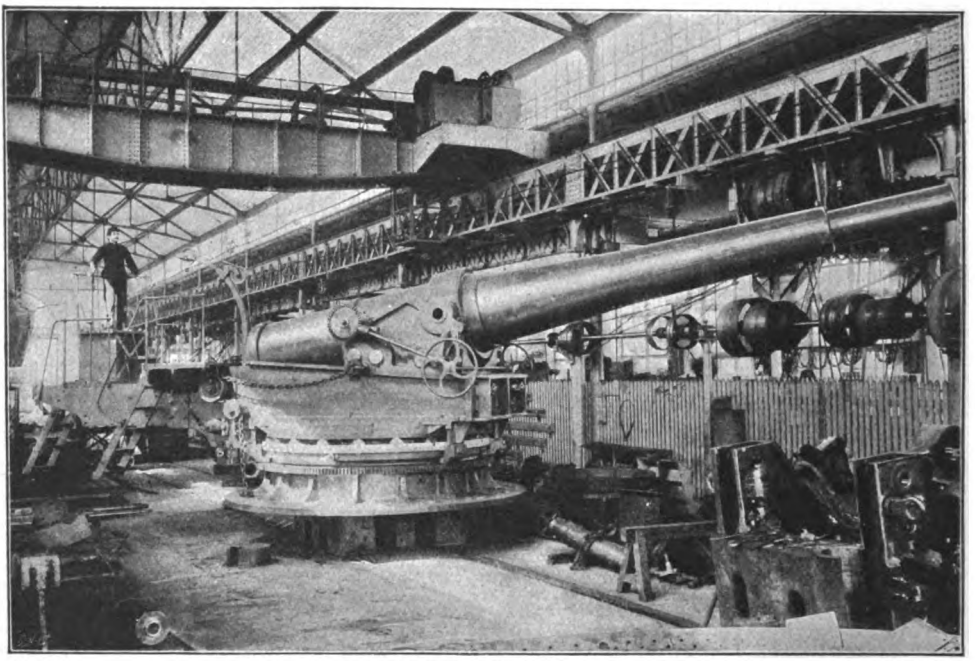
"It means," said Dicky Anderson, laying aside his newspaper, and gazing into the clear, childish eyes that were so like another pair of eyes he knew; "it means, Nell, dear, to want something very, very much—to think you have it almost in your grasp—and then to lose it."

"I see," said the child, thoughtfully; "that's what the stockrider meant when he said he was within an ace of getting me a lovely blue bird. He gave me a baby rabbit instead; but it can't sing, and—and it's not quite the same as getting the thing one wanted at first, is it, Uncle Dick?"

"No," said Dicky Anderson, thoughtfully. "You're right, Nell, dear; it's not quite the same thing, after all."

Where "Long Tom" Was Made

By M. Dinorben Griffith and D. Bril.



From a] READY FOR THE FRONT. [*Photograph.*

ONE gloomy, murky, and despondingly wet morning, when the present year was still in its babyhood, we found ourselves within the vigilantly guarded portals of Messrs. Schneider and Company's famous Metallurgical Works at Creusôt—the second largest and most important in the world. Nay, Creusôt has well earned the right to be termed "The World's Iron Metropolis."

Strangers are permitted to visit the works, with the exception of the Artillery Department, in parties of ten to twenty, but only under the escort of a guide provided by the company and at the hours of 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. The visit is strictly limited to two hours, and a second visit by the same party is prohibited. We were happily exempt from these restrictions, as we had a special permit. After signing our names in the register we were conducted from the porter's lodge, along passages, down steps, through the counting-house, and into the manager's room, and duly provided with a guide.

"The works cover three miles of ground," said our cicerone, "so you will not be able to see it all in one day."

Many and wonderful were the sights we witnessed, and every hour of that day I regretted I had not insured my life before leaving London. We had to pick our way carefully to avoid accidents, and such little obstacles as sheets of red-hot iron, or a few hundred rails in the same condition; to hop nimbly aside to avoid trains, that came from all directions at once, and seemed as much at home inside the workshops as out. Loaded with cubes of steel at a white heat, and weighing several tons, they nonchalantly steamed along, spreading waves of heat as they passed, the metal fuming and hissing as the rain fell upon it in the open.

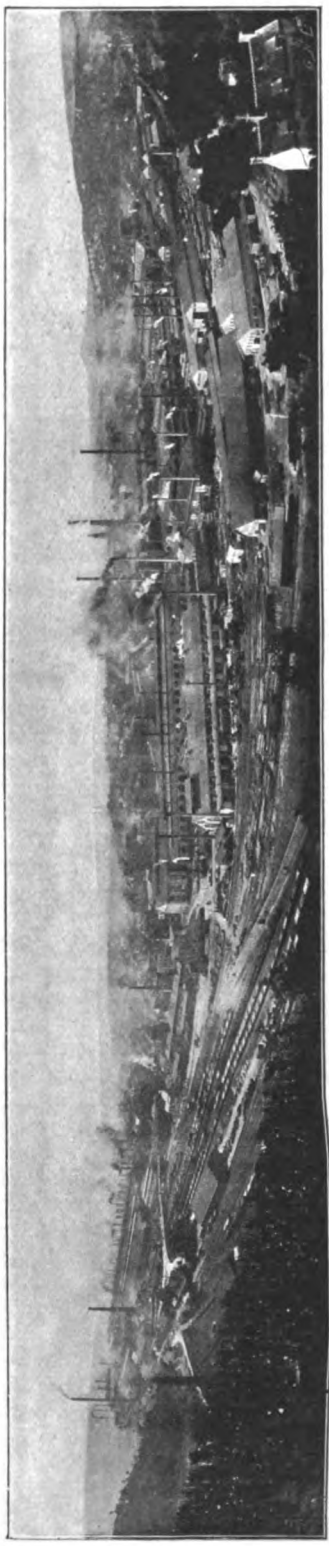
With a "*Pardon*" the guide suddenly dragged us aside, to make room for a strange procession. Half-a-dozen men in scanty raiment dashed past us drawing long-handled trucks, containing huge, shapeless masses of red-hot metal just raked from the mouth of a furnace. They had no time for pause, or even for a "By your leave." We followed in their—distant—wake, and saw the trucks empty their contents near what seemed to be a series of caverns, guarded by men in leather breeches, and wearing metal veils. With long forks they pushed the metal into the caverns, where huge hammers flattened it and thrust it out; again and again it was pushed

back, each time emerging more shapely, until finally it was of the required dimensions.

From building to building we wandered. In some the heat was — well, considerably more than tropical, and instead of rain we were treated to showers of sparks. Then outside, into rain, mud, and fog, and into another building, with a temperature borrowed from the North Pole, where we saw stacks of metal, polished and cold; noiseless machinery punching holes, or cutting off great hunks of metal as gently as if they were cutting cake. It was all weird, uncanny, and desolate, for the few workmen were in miniature locomotives overhead, directing and ordering those demon machines with many mysterious valves and wheels.

The next workshop was a distinct contrast, being the *aciéries* for the fabrication of steel by the Bessemer process. Here man's inventive genius had converted the most dangerous element into a useful servitor, feeding its fury only to make it work more efficiently, measuring its passion only to restrain and utilize it at will. A single tongue of flame let loose could have licked half-a-dozen of its puny masters out of existence, leaving but little trace behind.

We witnessed a superb display of fireworks. Huge cauldrons were uncovered and their contents inspected, which in return for such attention belched out flames with a roar and a fury that were grand at a safe distance. Fire climbed the tall chimneys and played outside, illuminating the town from end to end; while waggons rumbled in



[*Photograph.*

PANORAMA OF THE CREUSÔT WORKS.

From a]

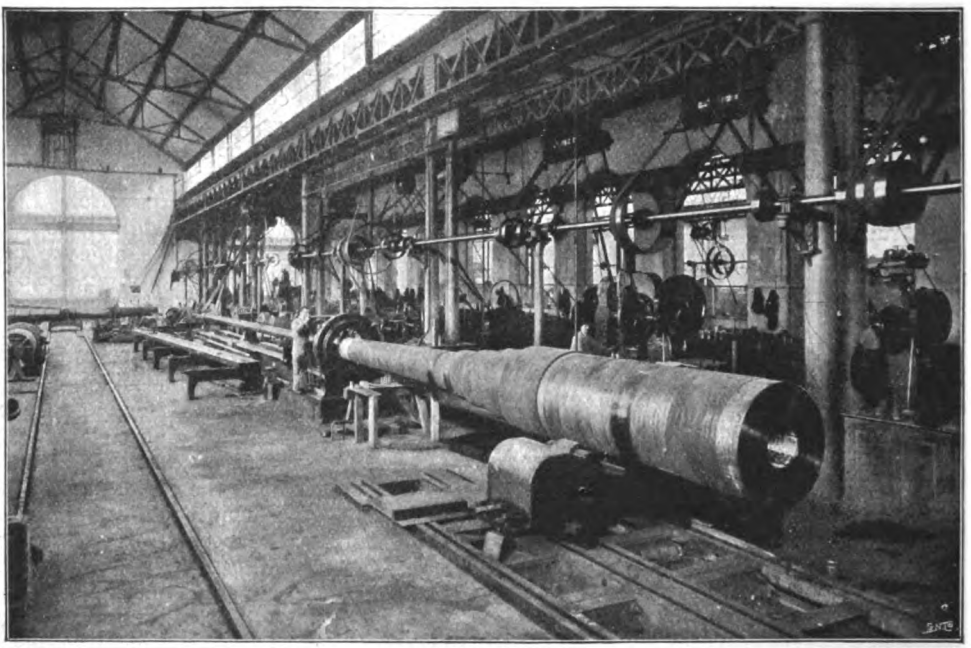
from the adjacent mines with coal to satisfy its voracious appetite. The daily consumption of coal is 300 waggons, making a total of 121,000 tons per annum, two-thirds of which is imported — chiefly from England. In addition to this 200,000 tons of coke are also consumed, 2,800,000 cubic mètres of gas, and 3,600,000 cubic mètres of water.

The iron mines of the company employ 2,000 men, the coal mines 5,000, the furnaces 700, the steel works 800, the forges 2,700, the machinery works 2,800, and the locomotives, etc., 1,500. Altogether, 15,500 workmen, and not including the clerical staff, porters, watchmen, messengers, etc.

The extensive artillery works were constructed in 1888; before that period this department of work was carried on in the general machine shops. These workshops are very large, light, and fully equipped with all the latest machinery. The guns are brought here from the forge, and pass through different departments to be turned, bored, polished, grooved, and mounted with the greatest care and accuracy, according to plans. The steel to be employed in gun-making is of the finest quality, and before it is sent to the workshops it is submitted to the severest tests.

Here we found cannons to right of us, cannons to left of us, cannons behind, and cannons before; fortunately, they did *not* volley and thunder, or this article would not have been written for THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

It is fashionable now, I believe, to jot down one's impression of any notable



From a] TURNING A BIG GUN. *[Photograph.*

scene or event. Mark Twain has saved me that trouble; he has so accurately and ably expressed my feeling while visiting this particular department in the Creusôt Works, that I cannot do better than quote his words:—

"If the bubble reputation can be obtained only at the cannon's mouth I am willing to go there for it — provided the cannon is empty. If it is loaded, my immortal and inflexible purpose is to get over the fence and go home."

Even when unloaded there is a vindictive look about a cannon that prevents your getting on familiar terms with it. You lean in a seemingly careless attitude, resting your hand on the base of its long, lean neck, when suddenly it swings round, and with its one eye stares you in the face in a most objectionable manner, as if it wondered whether you were worth powder and shot or not.

After a shock of that kind it was difficult to absorb the voluble explanations of our guide, who dilated on the beauty of this gun, the deadly properties of another, and of what it *could* do when given a chance; then his description was interlarded with such terms as "bolsters, jackets, slides, pivots, centimètres, and millimètres," sufficient to make any brain reel, especially when the cannon, still with head in air, seemed to leer in the most impudent fashion.

As we traversed these great workshops we learnt from our guide that any of the guns shown us — from the great monsters intended for coast or fortress defence only, corresponding, I presume, to our 80 and 100 ton guns, to the vicious-looking 15-centimètre 50-calibre quick-firing gun, or the beautifully finished little 37-millimètre (1 7-16in.) quick firer, the wonderful handiness of which excited our admiration — could be manufactured, complete in every detail and fit for immediate service, in less time than a corresponding weapon could be produced by any other gun factory in existence.

The company have supplied guns to every country in the world with the exception of England and Germany. They undertake contracts for foreign Governments to supply guns, projectiles, and ammunition, but the former only are manufactured at Creusôt.

It was not until 1870 that gun-making was attempted by Messrs. Schneider, their first experiment being the mitrailleuse used in the Franco-German War with fair success. Before this period the old-fashioned cast-iron cannon had been replaced, first by bronze and then by steel guns; smooth bores had been thrown aside in favour of rifled weapons; and muzzle-loaders in favour of breech-loaders, both in small arms and artillery. And keeping abreast or in advance of all these changes, the firm became famous

as makers of the finest and most up-to-date modern steel ordnance.

One of the most powerful and deadly guns constructed at Creusôt is the "Long Tom" of Boer fame, which carries up to 15 kilomètres (about nine miles).

"How and where did the Boers get their guns?" we asked a member of the firm, a few days later.

"The Republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State had secured their guns and their rifles in 1895, buying their war material nearly everywhere," was the reply. "Thus they acquired guns from the Creusôt group, Nordenfelt, and Maxim; but we supplied nearly three-quarters, especially the 75, 120, and 155 guns of field and fortress artillery. Altogether, the number of modern guns in their possession must be estimated at not less than ninety."

"And projectiles?"

"Well, you see, they foresaw the possibility of the English fleet cutting them off from the outer world, so they provided themselves with a large quantity of projectiles — 500 per *pièce*. We also sent out with the guns and material an instructor to teach *manœuvre* and to keep the guns in order.

"His name? M. Fleche. No, he has not yet returned."

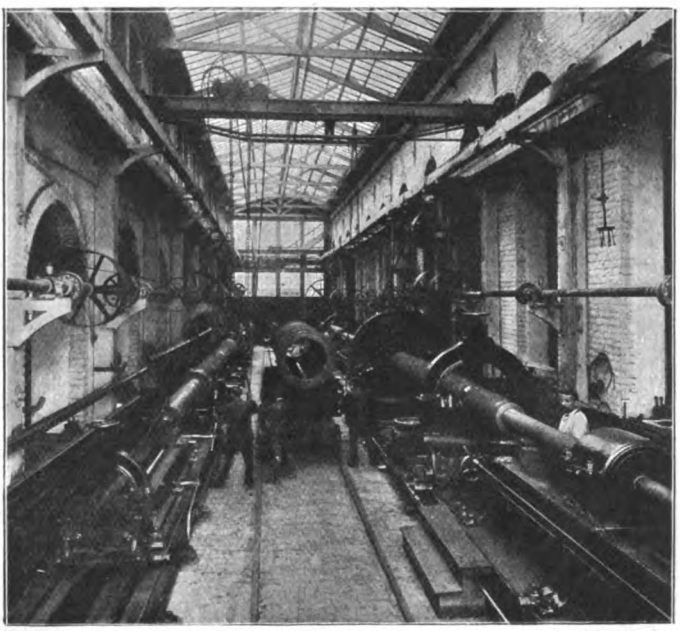
"What about your present orders for the Transvaal?" we asked.

"Ah, you want to know too much. I will answer that question next year."

But to return to the works and our patient guide. We saw the space allotted to the French guns, and were informed that they were always finished and mounted in the Government arsenals. We noticed two Japanese gentlemen, paper and pencil in hand, in earnest converse with one of the foremen. "Are they here out of curiosity to see the works?"

"No, they are here with orders for warships and guns for their Government. We have several foreign missions at Creusôt just now, Russian, Servian, Roumanian, and Japanese."

When a foreign Government wishes to order guns, ships, or locomotives, they send their plans in charge of one or two experts, whose duty it is to superintend their own orders. On no pretence whatever is a foreign engineer allowed in the works. The men employed are all French, and, taken altogether, are far superior in appearance and manner to the ordinary *ouvrier*. They work twelve hours a day, and are not permitted to leave the premises between the hour of their arrival and the closing of the works in the evening.



From a] A BORING-SHED. *[Photograph.*

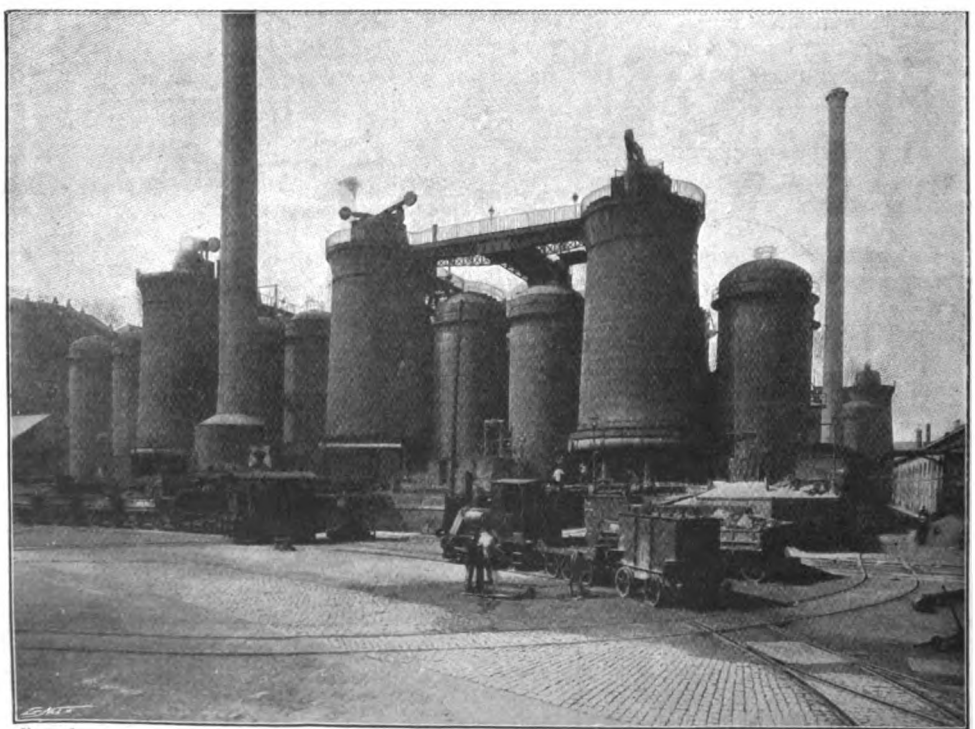
We were particularly struck with their refined faces, colourless, but as if carved out of fine ivory. Considering the number of hands employed, accidents are comparatively rare, and the diseases they suffer from are mostly heart and nervous complaints. They are paid by piecework; and according to their ability at a minimum daily wage, to which is added the profits of the piecework.

At the beginning of 1897 Messrs. Schneider acquired the ordnance department of the Société des Forges et Chantiers de la Méditerranée. This department is worked with Creusôt and the polygon of Hoc with that of Villedieu, under the able management of M. Canet, the great French gun designer and constructor, under the title of Services de l'Artillerie. This enormous Schneider-Canet combination, which will soon be

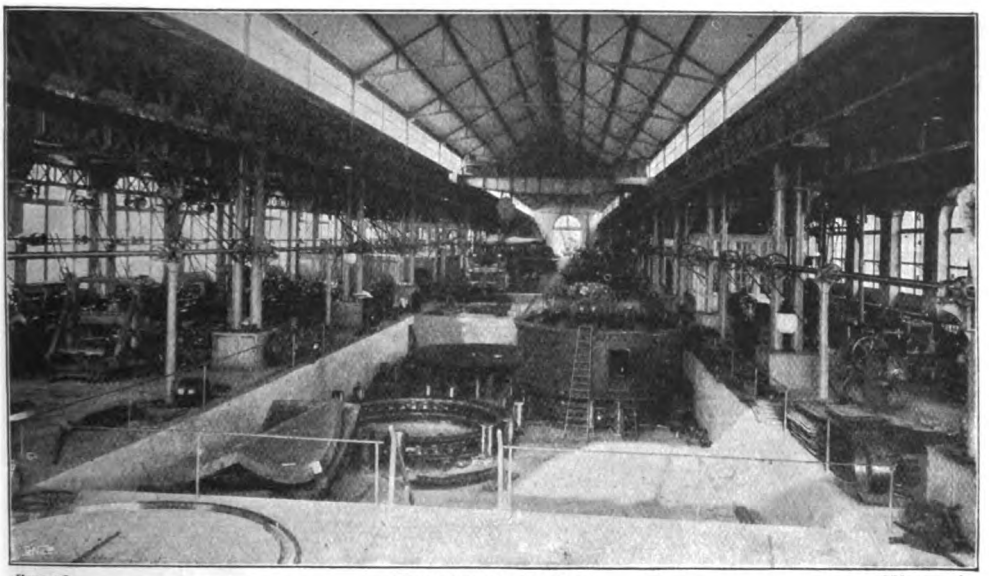
From a] FIRE-HOLES OF THE COKE FURNACES. *[Photograph.*

further enlarged, has made the artillery department of Creusôt one of the most important in the world, and a serious rival to Krupp and Armstrong in the production of war material.

The guns that have been already constructed show the steady progress of the firm since the date mentioned. The more recent type of quick-firing guns, made of steel throughout, are the 47-millimètre 60-calibre high power, which is specially suited for naval service on board ships of limited tonnage, as



From a] SOME OF THE FURNACES. *[Photograph.*



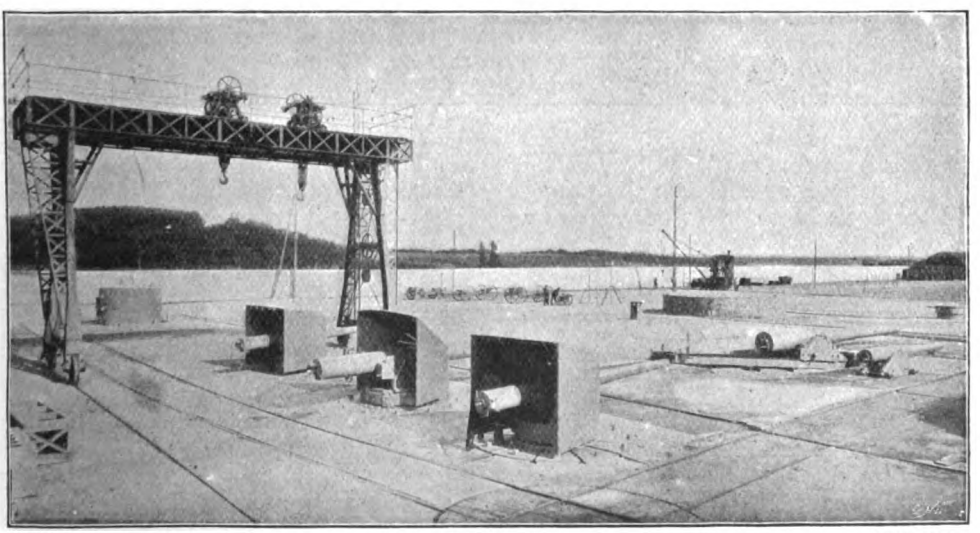
From a] AN ARTILLERY WORKSHOP. *[Photograph.*

it can be fired point-blank up to a distance of 1,000 mètres ; and the action of the breech-lock is almost instantaneous. Another gun in great demand is the 10-centimètre 45-calibre quick-firing, with special mechanism for training the gun. The 12-centimètre 45-calibre quick-firing is another favourite, a large number of this type having been ordered for Portugal for the armament of new cruisers.

The Spanish Government selected a 14-centimètre 45-calibre gun for their navy. These are so mounted as to limit the recoil, and to insure quick and automatic return.

For very rapid firing, which can be effected by one single gunner, the 15-centimètre 45-calibre is almost perfect ; it possesses all the improvements carried out for the Schneider-Canet quick-firing guns, and the fuse can be fired by percussion or by electricity.

A few yards from the artillery shops is situated the Villedieu proving-ground, electrically lit. This polygon is fully equipped for all kinds of tests. Twenty guns of varying calibres are kept permanently mounted there ; gun tubes are tested by firing from them a



From a] THE TESTING-GROUND. *[Photograph.*

gunpowder charge placed between two projectiles. Mountain and field guns pass through firing tests before they leave the works; also siege and garrison carriages and gun mountings and turrets—a careful record being kept of all these tests.

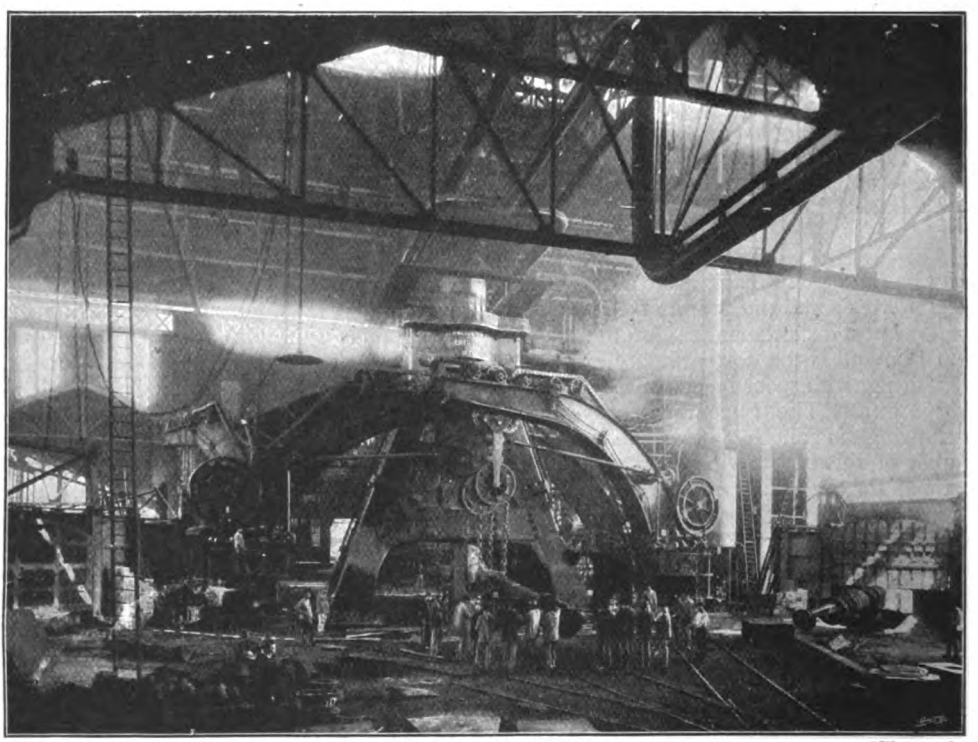
The firing staff, by means of mirrors, are enabled to witness, without danger, the result of various tests. Some of the firing platforms for field and mountain artillery are paved with stone, while others are grass-grown. A hill bounding the polygon on one side is known as the "Mountain of Bullets," because at one time the cannons tried there discharged their projectiles into its side.

In addition to the Villedieu proving-ground at Creusôt Messrs. Schneider have a polygon at Havre, at the mouth of the Seine, principally used for testing naval guns, and another at Tancarville for long-range firing tests.

There have been three generations of Schneiders at Creusôt. M. Eugene Schneider, the present director of the works, is the grandson of the founder. Still quite a young man, he is a born organizer, and a very clever business man. The town is practically Schneiderville built, kept up and ruled by the company, and the dwellings of the workmen and the other buildings erected for their comfort and pleasure are models of what can be done to elevate workmen and to make them independent and contented. The population is 32,000.

Guns of the Schneider-Canet system include all the types and calibres used for ships, coast and garrison defences, and for field service and siege operations. The guns of the Schneider-Canet system are now in use in all the following countries: France, Denmark, Turkey, Argentina, Russia, Greece, Holland, Spain, Uruguay, Switzerland, Japan, Mexico, Portugal, China, Transvaal, Sweden, Roumania, Chili, Hayti, Norway, Servia, Morocco, Brazil, and the Dominican Republic.

We shall always remember with pleasure the time we spent among the Creusôt guns, although before our departure we imagined we could hear "in tones of thunder the diapason of the cannonade" and "the blast of war's great organ shake the sky."



From a] A COLOSSAL STEAM-HAMMER. [*Photograph.*

The Brass Bottle.

By F. Anstey.

Author of "Vice-Versâ," etc., etc.

CHAPTER X.

NO PLACE LIKE HOME!

"MAY thy head long survive!" said Fakrash, by way of salutation, as he stepped through the archway.

"You're very good," said Horace, whose anger had almost evaporated in the relief of the Jinnee's unexpected return, "but I don't think any head can survive this sort of thing long."

"Art thou content with this dwelling I have provided for thee?" inquired the Jinnee, glancing around the stately hall with perceptible complacency.

It would have been positively brutal to say how very far from contented he felt, so Horace could only mumble that he had never been lodged like that before in all his life.

"It is far below thy deserts," Fakrash observed, graciously. "And were thy friends amazed at the manner of their entertainment?"

"They were," said Horace.

"A sure method of preserving friends is to feast them with liberality," remarked the Jinnee.

This was rather more than Horace's temper could stand. "You were kind enough to provide my friends with such a feast," he said, "that they'll never come *here* again."

"How so? Were not the meats choice and abounding in fatness? Was not the wine sweet, and the sherbet like unto perfumed snow?"

"Oh, everything was—er—as nice as possible," said Horace. "Couldn't have been better."

"Yet thou sayest that thy friends will return no more—for what reason?"

"Well, you see," explained Horace, reluctantly, "there's such a thing as doing people *too* well. I mean, it isn't everybody that appreciates Arabian cooking. But they might have stood that. It was the dancing girl that did for me."

"I commanded that a houri, lovelier than the full moon, and graceful as a young gazelle, should appear for the delight of thy guests."

"She came," said Horace, gloomily.

"Acquaint me with that which hath occurred—for I perceive plainly that something hath fallen out contrary to thy desires."

"Well," said Horace, "if it had been a bachelor party, there would have been no harm in the houri; but, as it happened, two of my guests were ladies, and they—well, they not unnaturally put a wrong construction on it all."

"Verily," exclaimed the Jinnee, "thy words are totally incomprehensible to me."

"I don't know what the custom may be in Arabia," said Horace, "but with us it is not usual for a man to engage a houri to dance after dinner to amuse the lady he is proposing to marry. It's the kind of attention she'd be most unlikely to appreciate."

"Then was one of thy guests the damsel whom thou art seeking to marry?"

"She was," said Horace, "and the other two were her father and mother. From which you may imagine that it was not altogether agreeable for me when your gazelle threw herself at my feet and hugged my knees and declared that I was the light of her eyes. Of course, it all meant nothing—it's probably the conventional behaviour for a gazelle, and I'm not reflecting upon her in the least. But, in the circumstances, it *was* compromising."

"I thought," said Fakrash, "that thou assured'st me that thou wast not contracted to any damsel?"

"I think I only said that there was no one whom I would trouble you to procure as a wife for me," replied Horace; "I certainly was engaged—though, after this evening, my engagement is at an end—unless . . . . that reminds me, do you happen to know whether there really *was* an inscription on the seal of your bottle, and what it said?"

"I know naught of any inscription," said the Jinnee; "bring me the seal that I may see it."

"I haven't got it by me at this moment," said Horace; "I lent it to my friend—the father of this young lady I told you of. You see, Mr. Fakrash, you got me into—I mean, I was in such a hole over this affair that I was obliged to make a clean breast of it to him. And he wouldn't believe it, so it struck me that there might be an inscription of some sort on the seal, saying who you were, and why Solomon had you confined in the bottle. Then the Professor would be obliged to admit that there's something in my story."

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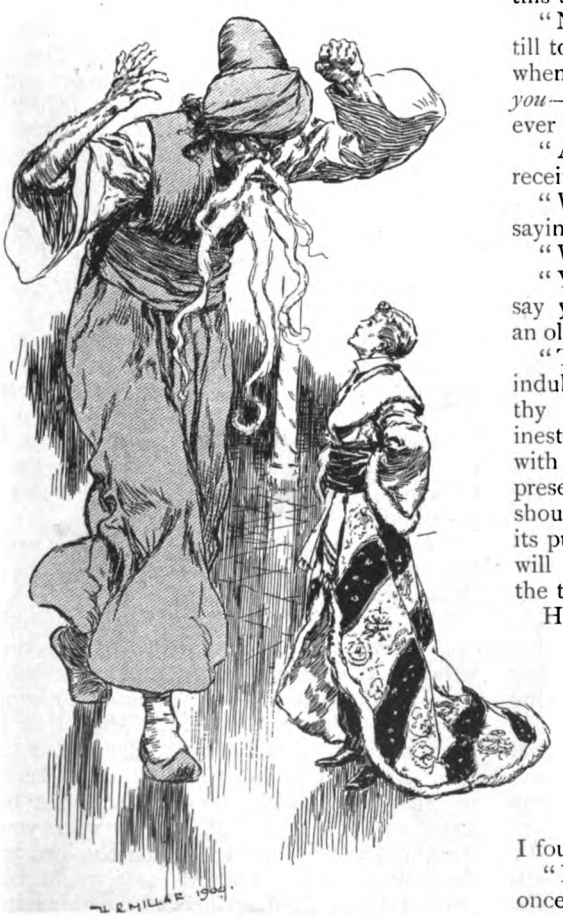
"Truly, I wonder at thee and at the smallness of thy penetration," the Jinnee commented; "for if there were indeed any writing upon this seal, it is not possible that one of thy race should be able to decipher it."

"Oh, I beg your pardon," said Horace; "Professor Futvoye is an Oriental scholar; he can make out any inscription, no matter how many thousands of years old it may be. If anything's there, he'll decipher it. The question is whether anything *is* there."

The effect of this speech on Fakrash was as unexpected as it was inexplicable: the Jinnee's features, usually so mild, began to work convulsively until they became terrible to look at, and suddenly, with a fierce howl, he shot up to nearly double his ordinary stature.

"O thou of little sense and breeding!" he cried, in a loud voice; "how camest thou to deliver the bottle in which I was confined into the hands of this learned man?"



"HE SHOT UP TO NEARLY DOUBLE HIS ORDINARY STATURE."

Ventimore, startled as he was, did not lose his self-possession. "My dear sir," he said, "I did not suppose you could have any further use for it. And, as a matter of fact, I didn't give Professor Futvoye the bottle—which is over there in the corner—but merely the stopper. I wish you wouldn't tower over me like that—it gives me a crick in the neck to talk to you. Why on earth should you make such a fuss about my lending the seal; what possible difference can it make to you even if it does confirm my story? And it's of immense importance to *me* that the Professor should believe I told the truth."

"I spoke in haste," said the Jinnee, slowly resuming his normal size, and looking slightly ashamed of his recent outburst as well as uncommonly foolish. "The bottle truly is of no value; and as for the stopper, since it is but lent, it is no great matter. If there be any legend upon the seal, perchance this learned man of whom thou speakest will by this time have deciphered it?"

"No," said Horace, "he won't tackle it till to-morrow. And it's as likely as not that when he does he won't find any reference to *you*—and I shall be up a taller tree than ever!"

"Art thou so desirous that he should receive proof that thy story is true?"

"Why, of course I am! Haven't I been saying so all this time?"

"Who can satisfy him so surely as I?"

"You!" cried Horace. "Do you mean to say you really would? Mr. Fakrash, you *are* an old brick! That would be the very thing!"

"There is naught," said the Jinnee, smiling indulgently, "that I would not do to promote thy welfare, for thou hast rendered me inestimable service. Acquaint me therefore with the abode of this sage, and I will present myself before him, and if haply he should find no inscription upon the seal, or its purport should be hidden from him, then will I convince him that thou hast spoken the truth and no lie."

Horace very willingly gave him the Professor's address. "Only don't drop in on him to-night, you know," he thought it prudent to add, "or you might startle him. Call any time after breakfast to-morrow, and you'll find him in."

"To-night," said Fakrash, "I return to pursue my search after Suleyman, on whom be peace. For not yet have I found him."

"If you *will* try to do so many things at once," said Horace, "I don't see how you can expect much results."

"At Nineveh they knew him not—for where I left a city I found but a heap of ruins, tenanted by owls and bats."

"*They say the lion and the lizard keep the Courts*——" murmured Horace, half to himself. "I was afraid you might be disappointed with Nineveh myself. Why not run over to Sheba? You might hear of him there."

"Seba of El-Yemen — the country of Bilkees, the Queen beloved of Suleyman," said the Jinnee. "It is an excellent suggestion, and I will follow it without delay."

"But you won't forget to look in on Professor Futvoye to-morrow, will you?"

"Assuredly I will not. And now, ere I depart, tell me if there be any other service I may render thee."

Horace hesitated. "There *is* just one," he said, "only I'm afraid you'll be offended if I mention it."

"On the head and the eye be thy commands!" said the Jinnee; "for whatsoever thou desirest shall be accomplished, provided that it lie within my power to perform it."

"Well," said Horace, "if you're sure you don't mind, I'll tell you. You've transformed this house into a wonderful place, more like the Alhambra—I don't mean the one in Leicester Square—than a London lodging-house. But then I am only a lodger here, and the people the house belongs to—excellent people in their way—would very much rather have the house as it was. They have a sort of idea that they won't be able to let these rooms as easily as the others."

"Base and sordid dogs!" said the Jinnee, with contempt.

"Possibly," said Horace, "it's narrow-minded of them—but that's the way they look at it. They've actually left rather than stay here. And it's *their* house—not mine."

"If they abandon this dwelling, thou wilt remain in the more secure possession."

"Oh, *shall* I, though? They'll go to law and have me turned out, and I shall have to pay ruinous damages into the bargain. So you see, what you intended as a kindness will only bring me bad luck."

"Come—without more words—to the statement of thy request," said Fakrash, "for I am in haste."

"HE SHOT UP LIKE A ROCKET."

"All I want you to do," replied Horace, in some anxiety as to what the effect of his request would be, "is to put everything here back to what it was before. It won't take you a minute."

"Of a truth," exclaimed Fakrash, "to bestow a favour upon thee is but a thankless undertaking, for not once, but twice, hast thou rejected my benefits — and now, behold, I am at a loss to devise means to gratify thee!"

"I know I've abused your good nature," said Horace; "but if you'll only do this, and then convince the Professor that my story is true, I shall be more than satisfied. I'll never ask another favour of you!"

"My benevolence towards thee hath no bounds—as thou shalt see; and I can deny thee nothing, for truly thou art a worthy and temperate young man. Farewell, then, and be it according to thy desire."

He raised his arms above his head, and shot up like a rocket towards the lofty dome, which split asunder to let him pass. Horace, as he gazed after him, had a momentary glimpse of deep blue sky, with a star or two

that seemed to be hurrying through the transparent opal scud, before the roof closed in once more.

Then came a low, rumbling sound, with a shock like a mild earthquake: the slender pillars swayed under their horseshoe arches; the big hanging-lanterns went out; the walls narrowed, and the floor heaved and rose—till Ventimore found himself up in his own familiar sitting-room once more, in the dark. Outside he could see the great square still shrouded in grey haze—the street lamps were flickering in the wind; a belated reveller was beguiling his homeward way by rattling his stick against the railings as he passed.

Inside the room everything was exactly as before, and Horace found it difficult to believe that a few minutes earlier he had been standing on that same site, but twenty feet or so below his present level, in a spacious blue-tiled hall, with a domed ceiling and gaudy pillared arches.

But he was very far from regretting his short-lived splendour; he burnt with shame and resentment whenever he thought of that nightmare banquet, which was so unlike the quiet, unpretentious little dinner he had looked forward to.

However, it was over now, and it was useless to worry himself about what could not be helped. Besides, fortunately, there was no great harm done: the Jinnee had been brought to see his mistake, and, to do him justice, had shown himself willing enough to put it right. He had promised to go and see the Professor next day, and the result of the interview could not fail to be satisfactory. And after this, Ventimore thought, Fakrash would have the sense and good-feeling not to interfere in his affairs again.

Meanwhile he could sleep now with a mind free from his worst anxieties, and he went to his room in a spirit of intense thankfulness that he had a Christian bed to sleep in. He took off his gorgeous robes—the only things that remained to prove to him that the events of that evening had been no delusion—and locked them in his wardrobe with a sense of relief that he would never be required to wear them again, and his last conscious thought before he fell asleep was the comforting reflection that, if there were any barrier between Sylvia and himself, it would be removed in the course of a very few more hours.

CHAPTER XI.

A FOOL'S PARADISE.

VENTIMORE found next morning that his bath and shaving water had been brought up, from which he inferred, quite correctly, that his landlady must have returned.

Secretly he was by no means looking forward to his next interview with her, but she appeared with his bacon and coffee in a spirit so evidently chastened that he saw that he would have no difficulty so far as she was concerned.

"I'm sure, Mr. Ventimore, sir," she began, apologetically, "I don't know what you must have thought of me and Rapkin last night, leaving the house like we did!"

"It was extremely inconvenient," said Horace, "and not at all what I should have expected from you. But possibly you had some reason for it?"

"Why, sir," said Mrs. Rapkin, running

"SOMETHING COME OVER ME, AND COME OVER RAPKIN."

her hand nervously along the back of a chair, "the fact is something come over me, and come over Rapkin, as we couldn't stop here another minute not if it was ever so."

"Ah!" said Horace, raising his eyebrows, "restlessness, eh, Mrs. Rapkin? Awkward that it should come on just then, though, wasn't it?"

"It was the look of the place, somehow," said Mrs. Rapkin. "If you'll believe me, sir, it was all changed like—nothing in it the same from top to bottom!"

"Really?" said Horace. "I don't notice any difference myself."

"No more don't I, sir, not by daylight; but last night it was all domes and harches and marble fountings let into the floor, with parties moving about downstairs all silent and as black as your hat—which Rapkin saw them as well as what I did."

"From the state your husband was in last night," said Horace, "I should say he was capable of seeing anything—and double of most things."

"I won't deny, sir, that Rapkin mayn't have been quite hisself, as a very little upsets him after he's spent an afternoon studying the papers and what-not at the libery. But I see the niggers, too, Mr. Ventimore, and no one can say I ever take more than is good for me."

"I don't suggest that for a moment, Mrs. Rapkin," said Horace; "only, if the house was as you describe last night, how do you account for it's being all right this morning?"

Mrs. Rapkin in her embarrassment was reduced to folding her apron into small pleats. "It's not for me to say, sir," she replied, "but, if I was to give my opinion, it would be as them parties as called 'ere on camels the other day was at the bottom of it."

"I shouldn't wonder if you were right, Mrs. Rapkin," said Horace, blandly; "you see, you had been exerting yourself over the cooking, and no doubt were in an over-excited state, and, as you say, those camels had taken hold of your imagination until you were ready to see anything that Rapkin saw, and *he* was ready to see anything *you* did. It's not at all uncommon. Scientific people, I believe, call it 'Collective Hallucination.'"

"Law, sir!" said the good woman, considerably impressed by this diagnosis, "you don't mean to say I had *that?* I was always fanciful from a girl, and could see things in coffee-grounds as nobody else could—but I never was took like that before. And to think of me leaving my dinner half cooked, and you expecting your young lady and her pa and ma! Well, *there*, now, I *am* sorry. Whatever did you do, sir?"

"We managed to get food of sorts from somewhere," said Horace, "but it was most uncomfortable for me, and I trust, Mrs. Rapkin—I sincerely trust that it will not occur again."

"That I'll answer for it sha'n't, sir. And you won't take no notice to Rapkin, sir, will you? Though it was his seein' the niggers and that as put it into my 'ed; but I 'ave spoke to him pretty severe already, and he's truly sorry and ashamed for forgetting hisself as he did."

"Very well, Mrs. Rapkin," said Horace, "we will understand that last night's—hem—rather painful experience is not to be alluded to again—on either side."

He felt sincerely thankful to have got out of it so easily, for it was impossible to say what gossip might not have been set on foot if the Rapkins had not been brought to see the advisability of reticence on the subject.

"There's one more thing, sir, I wished for to speak to you about," said Mrs. Rapkin; "that great brass vawse as you bought at an oction some time back. I dunno if you remember it?"

"I remember it," said Horace. "Well, what about it?"

"Why, sir, I found it in the coal-cellar this morning, and I thought I'd ask if that was where you wished it kep' in future. For, though no amount o' polish could make it what I call a tasty thing, it's neither hornimental nor yet useful where it is at present."

"Oh," said Horace, rather relieved, for he had an ill-defined dread from her opening words that the bottle might have been misbehaving itself in some way. "Put it wherever you please, Mrs. Rapkin; do whatever you like with it—so long as I don't see the thing again!"

"Very good, sir, I on'y thought I'd ask the question," said Mrs. Rapkin, as she closed the door upon herself.

Altogether, Horace walked to Great Cloister Street that morning in a fairly cheerful mood and amiably disposed, even towards the Jinnee. With all his many faults, he was a thoroughly good-natured old fellow—very superior in every way to the one the Arabian Nights' fisherman found in *his* bottle.

"Ninety-nine Jinn out of a hundred," thought Horace, "would have turned nasty on finding benefit after benefit 'declined with thanks.' But one good point in Fak-

rash is that he *does* take a hint in good part, and, as soon as he can be made to see where he's wrong, he's always ready to set things right. And he thoroughly understands now that these Oriental dodges of his won't do nowadays, and that when people see a penniless man suddenly wallowing in riches they naturally want to know how he came by them. I don't suppose he will trouble me much in future. If he should look in now and then, I must put up with it. Perhaps, if I suggested it, he wouldn't mind coming in some form that would look less outlandish. If he would get himself up as a banker, or a bishop—the Bishop of Bagdad, say—I shouldn't care how often he called. Only, I can't have him coming down the chimney in either capacity. But he'll see that himself. And he's done me one real service — I mustn't let myself forget that. He sent me old Wackerbath. By the way, I wonder if he's seen my designs yet, and what he thinks of them."

He was at his table, engaged in jotting down some rough ideas for the decoration of the reception-rooms in the projected house, when Beevor came in.

"I've got nothing doing just now," he said; "so I thought I'd come in and have a squint at those plans of yours, if they're forward enough to be seen yet."

Ventimore had to explain that even the imperfect method of examination proposed was not possible, as he had dispatched the drawings to his client the night before.

"Phew!" said Beevor; "that's sharp work, isn't it?"

"I don't know. I've been sticking hard at it for over a fortnight."

"Well, you might have given me a chance of seeing what you've made of it. I let you see all *my* work!"

"To tell you the honest truth, old fellow, I wasn't at all sure you'd like it, and I was afraid you'd put me out of conceit with what I'd done, and Wackerbath was in a frantic hurry to have the plans—so there it was."

"And do you think he'll be satisfied with them?"

"He ought to be. I don't like to be cocksure, but I believe—I really do believe—that I've given him rather more than he expected. It's going to be a deuced good house, though I say it myself."

"Something new-fangled and fantastic, eh? Well, he mayn't care about it, you know. When you've had my experience you'll realize that a client is a rum bird to satisfy."

"I shall satisfy *my* old bird," said Horace, gaily. "He'll have a cage he can hop about in to his heart's content."

"I THOUGHT I'D COME IN AND HAVE A SQUINT AT THOSE PLANS OF YOURS."

"You're a clever chap enough," said Beevor, "but to carry a big job like this through you want one thing—and that's ballast."

"Not while you heave yours at my head! Come, old fellow, you aren't really riled because I sent off those plans without showing them to you? I shall soon have them back, and then you can pitch into 'em as much as you please. Seriously, though, I shall want all the help you can spare when I come to the completed designs."

"'Um," said Beevor, "you've got along very well alone so far—at least, by your own account; so I daresay you'll be able to manage without me to the end. Only, you know," he added, as he left the room, "you haven't won your spurs yet. A fellow isn't

necessarily a Gilbert Scott, or a Norman Shaw, or a Waterhouse just because he happens to get a sixty-thousand pound job the first go off!"

"Poor old Beevor!" thought Horace, repentantly, "I've put his back up. I might just as well have shown him the plans, after all; it wouldn't have hurt me, and it would have pleased *him*. Never mind, I'll make my peace with him after lunch. I'll ask him to give me his idea for a—no, hang it all, even friendship has its limits!"

He returned from lunch to hear what sounded like an altercation of some sort in his office, in which, as he neared his door, Beevor's voice was distinctly audible.

"My dear sir," he was saying, "I have already told you that it is no affair of mine."

"But I ask you, sir, as a brother architect," said another voice, "whether you consider it professional or reasonable——?"

"As a brother architect," replied Beevor, as Ventimore opened the door, "I would rather be excused from giving an opinion . . . . Ah, here is Mr. Ventimore himself."

"HORACE ENTERED, TO FIND HIMSELF CONFRONTED BY MR. WACKERBATH."

Horace entered, to find himself confronted by Mr. Wackerbath, whose face was purple and whose white whiskers were bristling with rage. "So, sir!" he began. "So, sir!——" and choked ignominiously.

"There appears to have been some misunderstanding, my dear Ventimore," explained Beevor, with a studious correctness which was only a shade less offensive than open triumph. "I think I'd better leave you and this gentleman to talk it over quietly."

"Quietly!" exclaimed Mr. Wackerbath, with an apoplectic snort; "*quietly!!*"

"I've no idea what you are so excited about, sir," said Horace. "Perhaps you will explain?"

"Explain!" Mr. Wackerbath gasped, "why—no, if I speak just now, I shall be ill: *you* tell him," he added, waving a plump hand in Beevor's direction.

"I'm not in possession of all the facts," said Beevor, smoothly; "but, so far as I can gather, this gentleman thinks that, considering the importance of the work he intrusted to your hands, you have given less time to it than he might have expected. As I have told him, that is a matter which does not concern me, and which he must discuss with you."

So saying, Beevor retired to his own room, and shut the door with the same irreproachable discretion, which conveyed that he was not in the least surprised, but was too much of a gentleman to show it.

"Well, Mr. Wackerbath," began Horace, when they were alone, "so you're disappointed with the house?"

"Disappointed!" said Mr. Wackerbath, furiously. "I am disgusted, sir, disgusted!"

Horace's heart sank lower still; had he deceived himself after all, then? Had he been nothing but a conceited fool, and—most galling thought of all—had Beevor judged him only too accurately? And yet, no, he could not believe it—he *knew* his work was good!

"This is plain speaking with a vengeance," he said; "I'm sorry you're dissatisfied. I did my best to carry out your instructions."

"Oh, you did?" sputtered Mr. Wackerbath. "That's what you call—but go on, sir, *go* on!"

"I got it done as quickly as possible," continued Horace, "because I understood you wished no time to be lost."

"No one can accuse you of dawdling over it. What I should like to know is how the

deuce you managed to get it done in the time?"

"I worked incessantly all day and every day," said Horace. "That's how I managed it—and this is all the thanks I get for it!"

"Thanks?" Mr. Wackerbath well-nigh howled. "You—you insolent young charlatan; you expect thanks!"

"Now look here, Mr. Wackerbath," said Horace, whose own temper was getting a little frayed, "I'm not accustomed to being treated like this, and I don't intend to submit to it. Just tell me—in as moderate language as you can command—what you object to."

"I object to the whole cursed thing, sir! I mean, I repudiate the entire concern. It's the work of a raving lunatic—a place that no English gentleman, sir, with any self-respect or—ah—consideration for his reputation and position in the county, could consent to occupy for a single hour!"

"Oh," said Horace, feeling deathly sick, "in that case it is useless, of course, to suggest any modifications."

"Absolutely!" said Mr. Wackerbath.

"Very well, then; there's no more to be said," replied Horace. "You will have no difficulty in finding an architect who will be more successful in realizing your intentions. Mr. Beevor, the gentleman you met just now," he added, with a touch of bitterness, "would probably be just your man. Of course, I retire altogether. And really, if anyone is the sufferer over this, I fancy it's myself. I can't see how you are any the worse."

"Not any the worse?" cried Mr. Wackerbath, "when the infernal place is built!"

"Built!" echoed Horace, feebly.

"I tell you, sir, I saw it with my own eyes driving to the station this morning; my coachman and footman saw it; my wife saw it—confound it, sir, we *all* saw it!"

"'GREETING TO YE,' SAID FAKRASH."

Then Horace understood. His indefatigable Jinnee had been at work again! Of course, for Fakrash it must have been what he would term "the easiest of affairs"—especially after a glance at the plans (and Ventimore remembered that the Jinnee had surprised him at work upon them, and even requested to have them explained to him)—to dispense with contractors and bricklayers and carpenters, and construct the entire building in the course of a single night.

It was a generous and spirited action—but, particularly now that the original designs had been found faulty and rejected, it placed the unfortunate architect in a most invidious position.

"Well, sir," said Mr. Wackerbath, with elaborate irony, "I presume it is you whom I have to thank for improving my land by erecting this precious palace on it?"

"I—I—" began Horace, utterly broken down, and then he saw, with emotions that may be imagined, the Jinnee himself, in his green robes, standing immediately behind Mr. Wackerbath.

"Greeting to ye," said Fakrash, coming forward with his smile of amiable cunning. "If I mistake not," he added, addressing the startled estate-agent, who had jumped visibly, "thou art the merchant for whom my son here," and he laid a hand on Horace's shrinking shoulder, "undertook to construct a mansion?"

"I am," said Mr. Wackerbath, in some mystification. "Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Ventimore, senior?"

"No, no," put in Horace; "no relation. He's a sort of informal partner."

"Hast thou not found him an architect of divine gifts?" inquired the Jinnee, beaming with pride. "Is not the palace that he hath raised for thee by his transcendent accomplishments a marvel of beauty and stateliness, and one that Sultans might envy?"

"No, sir," shouted the infuriated Mr. Wackerbath; "since you ask my opinion, it's nothing of the sort! It's a ridiculous, tom-fool cross between the palm-house at Kew and the Brighton Pavilion! There's no billiard-room, and not a decent bedroom in the house. I've been all over it, so I ought to know; and as for drainage, there isn't a sign of it. And he has the brass—ah, I should say, the unblushing effrontery—to call that a country house!"

Horace's dismay was curiously shot with relief. The Jinnee, who was certainly very far from being a genius except by courtesy, had taken it upon himself to erect the palace according to his own notions of Arabian domestic luxury—and Horace, taught by bitter experience, could sympathize to some extent with his unfortunate client. On the other hand, it was balm to his smarting self-respect to find that it was not his own plans after all which had been found so preposterous; and, by some obscure mental process, which I do not propose to explain, he became reconciled, and almost grateful, to the officious Fakrash, And then, too, he was *his* Jinnee, and Horace had no intention of letting him be bullied by an outsider.

"Let me explain, Mr. Wackerbath," he said. "Personally I've had nothing to do with this. This gentleman, wishing to spare me the trouble, has taken upon himself to build your house for you, without consulting either of us, and, from what I know of his powers in that direction, I've no doubt that—that it's a deuced fine place, in its way. Anyhow, we make no charge for it—he presents it to you as a free gift. Why not accept it as such and make the best of it?"

"Make the best of it?" stormed Mr. Wackerbath. "Stand by and see the best site in three counties defaced by a jimcrack Moorish nightmare like that! Why, they'll call it 'Wackerbath's Folly,' sir. I shall be the laughing-stock of the neighbourhood. I can't live in the beastly building. I couldn't afford to keep it up, and I won't have it cumbering my land. Do you hear? *I won't!* I'll go to law, cost me what it may, and compel you and your Arabian friend there to pull the thing down. I'll take the case up to the House of Lords, if necessary, and fight you as long as I can stand!"

"BEGONE TO THY KENNEL."

"As long as thou canst stand!" repeated Fakrash, gently. "That is a long time truly, O thou litigious one! . . . . On all fours, ungrateful dog that thou art!" he cried, with an abrupt and entire change of manner, "and crawl henceforth for the remainder of thy days. I, Fakrash-el-Aamash, command thee!"

It was both painful and grotesque to see the portly and intensely respectable Mr. Wackerbath suddenly drop forward on his hands while desperately striving to preserve his dignity.

"How dare you, sir?" he almost barked, "how *dare* you, I say? Are you aware that I could summon you for this? Let me up. I *insist* upon getting up!"

"O contemptible in aspect!" replied the Jinnee, throwing open the door. "Begone to thy kennel."

"I won't! I can't!" whimpered the unhappy man. "How do you expect me—

me!—to cross Westminster Bridge on all fours? What will the officials think at Waterloo, where I have been known and respected for years? How am I to face my family in—in this position? Do, for mercy's sake, let me get up!"

Horace had been too shocked and startled to speak before, but now humanity, coupled with disgust for the Jinnee's high-handed methods, compelled him to interfere. "Mr. Fakrash," he said, "this has gone far enough. Unless you stop tormenting this unfortunate gentleman, I've done with you."

"Never," said Fakrash. "He hath dared to abuse my palace, which is far too sumptuous a dwelling for such a son of a burnt dog as he. Therefore, I will make his abode to be in the dust for ever."

"But I *don't* find fault," yelped poor Mr. Wackerbath. "You—you entirely misunderstood the—the few comments I ventured to make. It's a capital mansion, handsome, and yet 'homey,' too. I'll never say another word against it. I'll—yes, I'll *live* in it—if only you'll let me up!"

"Do as he asks you," said Horace to the Jinnee, "or I swear I'll never speak to you again."

"Thou art the arbiter of this matter," was the reply. "And if I yield, it is at thy intercession, and not his. Rise, then," he said to the humiliated client; "depart, and show us the breadth of thy shoulders."

It was this precise moment which Beevor, who was probably unable to restrain his curiosity any longer, chose to re-enter the room. "Oh, Ventimore," he began, "did I leave my——? . . . I beg your pardon. I thought you were alone again."

"Don't go, sir," said Mr. Wackerbath, as he scrambled awkwardly to his feet, his usually florid face mottled in grey and lilac. "I—I should like you to know that, after talking things quietly over with your friend Mr. Ventimore and his partner here, I am thoroughly convinced that my objections were quite untenable. I retract all I said. The house is—ah—admirably planned: *most* convenient, roomy, and—ah—unconventional. The—the entire freedom from all sanitary appliances is a particular recommendation. In short, I am more than satisfied. Pray forget anything I may have said which might be taken to imply the contrary. . . . Gentlemen, good afternoon!"

He bowed himself past the Jinnee in a state of deference and apprehension, and was heard stumbling down the staircase. Horace hardly dared to meet Beevor's eyes, which were fixed upon the green-turbaned Jinnee, as he stood apart in dreamy abstraction, smiling placidly to himself.

"I say," Beevor said to Horace, at last, in an undertone, "you never told me you had gone into partnership."

"He's not a regular partner," whispered Ventimore; "he does things for me occasionally, that's all."

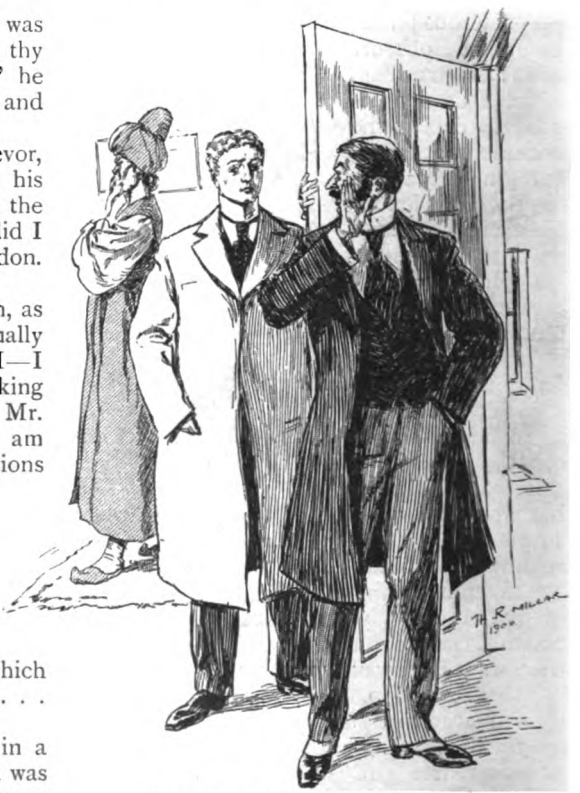
"He soon managed to smooth your client down," remarked Beevor.

"Yes," said Horace; "he's an Oriental, you see, and he has a—a very persuasive manner. Would you like to be introduced?"

"If it's all the same to you," replied Beevor, still below his voice, "I'd rather be excused. To tell you the truth, old fellow, I don't altogether fancy the looks of him, and it's my opinion," he added, "that the less you have to do with him the better. He strikes me as a wrong-'un, old man."

"No, no," said Horace; "eccentric, that's all—you don't understand him."

"Receive news!" began the Jinnee, after Beevor, with suspicion and disapproval



"HE STRIKES ME AS A WRONG-'UN, OLD MAN."

evident even on his back and shoulders, had retreated to his own room. "Suleyman, the Son of Daood, sleeps with his fathers."

"I know," retorted Horace, whose nerves were unequal to much reference to Solomon just then. "So does Queen Anne."

"I have not heard of her. But art thou not astounded, then, by my tidings?"

"I have matters nearer home to think about," said Horace, drily. "I must say, Mr. Fakrash, you have landed me in a pretty mess!"

"Explain thyself more fully, for I comprehend thee not."

"Why on earth," Horace groaned, "couldn't you let me build that house my own way?"

"Did I not hear thee with my own ears lament thy inability to perform the task? Thereupon, I determined that no disgrace should fall upon thee by reason of such incompetence, since I myself would erect a palace so splendid that it should cause thy name to live for ever. And, behold, it is done."

"It is," said Horace. "And so am I. I don't want to reproach you. I quite feel that you have acted with the best intentions; but, oh, hang it all! *can't* you see that you've absolutely wrecked my career as an architect?"

"That is a thing that cannot be," returned the Jinnee, "seeing that thou hast all the credit."

"The credit! This is England, not Arabia. What credit can I gain from being supposed to be the architect of an Oriental pavilion, which might be all very well for Haroun-al-Raschid, but I can assure you is preposterous as a home for an average Briton?"

"Yet that overfed hound," remarked the Jinnee, "expressed much gratification therewith."

"Naturally, after he had found that he could not give a candid opinion except on all-fours. A valuable testimonial, that! And how do you suppose I can take his money? No, Mr. Fakrash, if I have to go on all-fours myself for it, I must say, and I will say, that you've made a most frightful muddle of it!"

"Acquaint me with thy wishes," said Fakrash, a little abashed, "for thou knowest that I can refuse thee naught."

"Then," said Horace, boldly, "couldn't you remove that palace—dissipate it into space or something?"

"Verily," said the Jinnee, in an aggrieved tone, "to do good acts unto such as thee is but wasted time, for thou givest me no peace till they are undone!"

"This is the last time," urged Horace; "I promise never to ask you for anything again."

"Save for the magnitude of thy service unto me," said Fakrash, "I would not hearken to this caprice of thine, nor wilt thou find me so indulgent on another occasion. But for this once"—and he muttered some words and made a sweeping gesture with his right hand—"thy desire is granted unto thee. Of the palace and all that is therein there remaineth no trace!"

"Another surprise for poor old Wackerbath," thought Horace, "but a pleasant one this time. My dear Mr. Fakrash," he said, aloud, "I really can't say how grateful I am to you. And now—I hate bothering you like this, but if you *could* manage to look in on Professor Futvoye——"

"What!" cried the Jinnee, "yet another request? Already!"

"Well, you promised you'd do that before, you know!" said Horace.

"For that matter," remarked Fakrash, "I have already fulfilled my promise."

"You have?" Horace exclaimed. "And does he believe now that it's all true about that bottle?"

"When I left him," answered the Jinnee, "all his doubts were removed."

"By Jove, you *are* a trump!" cried Horace, only too glad to be able to commend with sincerity. "And do you think, if I went to him now, I should find him the same as usual?"

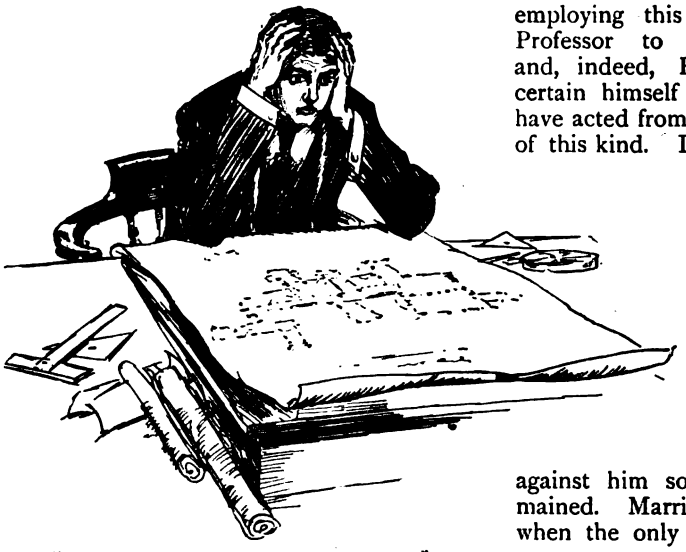
"Nay," said Fakrash, with his weak and yet inscrutable smile, "that is more than I can promise thee."

"But why?" asked Horace, "if he knows all?"

There was the oddest expression in the Jinnee's furtive eyes: a kind of elfin mischief with a sense of wrong-doing, like a naughty child whose palate is still reminiscent of illicit jam. "Because," he replied, with a sound between a giggle and a chuckle, "because, in order to overcome his unbelief, it was necessary to transform him into a one-eyed mule of hideous appearance."

"*What!*" cried Horace. But, whether to avoid thanks or explanations, the Jinnee had disappeared with his customary abruptness.

"Fakrash!" shouted Horace, "Mr. Fakrash! Come back! Do you hear? I *must* speak to you!" There was no answer; the Jinnee might be well on his way to Lake Chad, or Jericho, by that time—he was certainly far enough from Great Cloister Street.



"HORACE SAT DOWN AT HIS DRAWING-TABLE."

Horace sat down at his drawing-table, and, his head buried in his hands, tried to think out this latest complication. Fakrash had transformed Professor Futvoye into a one-eyed mule. It would have seemed incredible, almost unthinkable, once, but so many impossibilities had happened to Horace of late that one more made little or no strain upon his credulity.

What he felt chiefly was the new barrier that this event must raise between himself and Sylvia; to do him justice, the mere fact that the father of his *fiancée* was a mule did not lessen his ardour in the slightest. Even if he had felt no personal responsibility for the calamity, he loved Sylvia far too well to be deterred by it, and few family cupboards are without a skeleton of some sort.

No, he would have married Sylvia just as cheerfully if her father had been turned into a three-legged pelican or a two-headed toad, instead of simply a one-eyed mule. With courage and the determination to look only on the bright side of things, almost any domestic drawback can be lived down.

But the real point, as he instantly recognised, was whether in the changed condition of circumstances Sylvia would consent to marry *him*. Might she not, after the experiences of that abominable dinner of his the night before, connect him in some way with her poor father's transformation? She might even suspect him of employing this means of compelling the Professor to renew their engagement; and, indeed, Horace was by no means certain himself that the Jinnee might not have acted from some muddle-headed motive of this kind. It was likely enough that the Professor, after learning the truth, should have refused to allow his daughter to marry the *protégé* of so dubious a patron, and that Fakrash had then resorted to pressure.

In any case, Ventimore knew Sylvia well enough to feel sure that pride would steel her heart against him so long as this obstacle remained. Marriage was out of the question when the only creature who could give her away was a one-eyed mule.

It would be unseemly to set down here all that Horace said and thought of the person who had brought all this upon them, but after some wild and futile raving he became calm enough to recognise that his proper place was by Sylvia's side. Perhaps he ought to have told her at first, and then she would have been less unprepared for this—and yet how could he trouble her mind so long as he could cling to the hope that the Jinnee would cease to interfere?

But now he could be silent no longer; naturally the prospect of calling at Cottesmore Gardens just then was anything but agreeable, but he felt it would be cowardly to keep away.

Besides, he could cheer them up; he could bring with him a message of hope. No doubt they believed that the Professor's transformation would be permanent—a harrowing prospect for so united a family; but, fortunately, Horace would be able to reassure them on this point.

Fakrash had always revoked his previous performances as soon as he could be brought to understand their fatuity—and Ventimore would take good care that he revoked this.

Nevertheless, it was with a sinking heart and an unsteady hand that he pulled the visitors' bell at the Futvoyes' house that afternoon, for he neither knew in what state he should find that afflicted family, nor how they would regard his intrusion at such a time.

(To be continued.)

The Dragon-Fly.

By Arthur Ruck.

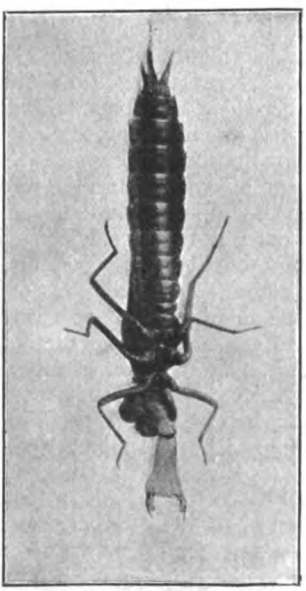
Illustrated by Photographs from Life, by the Author.

WHO does not know the dragon-fly, that delicate dream of blue and gauze, with clear or smoky wings flitting lightly from reed to rush, or the fierce gentleman with great goggle eyes and green body dry as a quill and straight as a grass stem, who dashes here, there, and everywhere, scattering terror and death among the winged insect world, and terrifying not a few perhaps of the lords or, at least, the ladies of creation? But not everyone knows that this dandy was born in a ditch, and few would recognise him now that he has got up in the world for the same as is figured in photograph No. 1. Yet so it is, and astonishing is the transformation; not more surprising, perhaps, than that from caterpillar to butterfly, but certainly more startling in its method of development, as the illustrations may help to show.

1.—THE DRAGON-FLY LARVA LIVING IN THE WATER.

Now, the first claim for admiration made for my little friend is not for beauty certainly, but for the way in which he breathes. Unlike many other water-dwellers, for instance, the great water beetle, the boatman, and many others, he is not obliged to come up to the surface for a fresh supply of oxygen; he spends all the early part of his life always under water, but he does it from choice, not necessity. He can, when occasion arises, spend days out of water, and be none the worse for it, except that he returns to the bosom of his family with a fine healthy appetite.

The dragon-fly larva, which is illustrated in this article, is certainly amphibious for a part, at least, of its life. Not the showman's kind, observe—"This 'ere beast is amphibilious, which means, yer know, as 'e can't live on land, and dies as soon as 'e gets in the water"—but he can breathe in either air or water equally well. Even at a very tender age he can, if obliged, spend as much as a month out of the water, and before his final change he seems to be indifferent as to which element he breathes in; and you may see him with head out of water, or tail out of water, breathing the upper air through either end of him, and that for days at a time; or else entirely under water breathing the air dissolved in water, as do the fish; and the reason he makes his home in the water is apparently for the one but sufficient reason that his food lives there.



2.—THE WONDERFUL LOWER JAW.

He is a clever little beast, but contradictory withal, as even his names may show; he is not a fly, for flies have but two wings and he has four, and he is certainly not a dragon; he is not a stinger, for he has no sting, and he has no connection whatever with horses; he has a long arm coming out from under his chin (Fig. 2), which the small water creatures which come near him have every reason to dread; and he shoots through the water by a method which is all his own—that is, by means of a jet of water which he expels violently from a kind of torpedo-tube astern. As a rule, he contents himself with keeping still and lying in wait, or with stalking his prey with much circumspection until his long lower

jaw, known as a mask, can reach his unsuspecting victim; but his curious water-jet enables him to travel through the water with great speed when he is moved by one of the many reasons for wishing to be elsewhere which are so well known to those whose lives consist in eating, or being eaten—if anyone not an Irishman may be allowed the expression.

Now, our friend's power of breathing in either air or water, although not unique, is very uncommon, and puts the frog, and other like animals, who have so long arrogated to themselves the title of amphibians, entirely into the shade. The frog is not much more amphibious than the gentleman who takes his tub regularly winter and summer throughout the year; indeed, not so much so, for the frog shirks both his tub and the question during the winter by burying himself in the mud and not breathing at all. Insects have much too much to do with their mouths in the great business of eating, with which the early part of their lives is entirely spent, to be able to afford to breathe through their mouths, so that they must be supplied with air in some other way, and they have accordingly pairs of spiracles, or breathing mouths, on the various segments of which their bodies consist.

Now, a dragon-fly larva has these spiracles and breathing tubes well developed. In Figs. 5, 6, 9, and 10 are seen some slender white threads, which have been broken as the creature emerges; these are the tracheæ, or air tubes, and connect with the spiracles, or breathing holes, the largest pair of which is situated on each side behind the head, and there are besides others pairs less highly developed. But in addition to this apparatus, which supplies air direct to the tracheæ, or air passages, the dragon-fly larva has another apparatus at his tail end, consisting in some species of a three-lobed flattened paddle, which serves both for swimming and for breathing, after the manner of a fish's gills, or, as in the species here illustrated, of a means of alternately drawing in and expelling the water through the tail, and extracting the air which is contained in the water.

This latter style of water breathing is the one ordinarily used during the earlier stages of the larva's existence; but later, when he is nearly or quite full fed, the nymph, as he is then called, crawls to the top of the water, sits with head and shoulders out in the air, gives up hunting, breathes through the spiracles on one or both shoulders, and seemingly "thinks of nothing at all," like any other jolly young waterman.

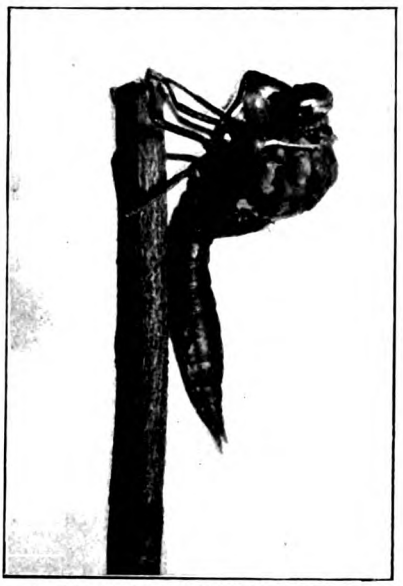
Now, all this shows that the nymph of the dragon-fly is a very astute individual, and well prepared for all emergencies. By the exercise of much careful selection he has so modified the defects of his original conformation, that when his natal ditch is dried up he does not perish, but travels contentedly to another, and he takes much credit to himself for having so successfully cultivated the once discredited art of teaching successive generations of grandmothers; and as for any mistakes which may be thought to have occurred in the process, he ascribes those all to Nature, which, of course, is highly creditable to his intelligence, though slightly unjust: still, it shows that he is quite up to date in his views as to where the admiration for so much foresight should rightly be bestowed.

Now, after many months' continuous eating when food is plentiful, and of hopeful expectancy when it is not, after splitting many suits of clothes down the back and emerging resplendent in a new one, each more roomy than the last, he feels, as we all do when the summer comes, "to want a change": in the hot days of August he climbs up a stick, or a water plant, upon which to perform his marvellous transformation from a dull-hued, spiny dweller in a ditch to the brilliant, sun-loving dragon-fly, swiftest of insects, resplendent with gauzy wings and topaz body, who untiringly hawks by hedgerow and pond, inquisitively poising himself within a foot of your face, and sending the village children screaming down the road in terror of the horse-stinger, although he is absolutely harmless to all but flies.

But do not let it be thought that any stick or stem will do: his life depends upon the support not failing him at the critical time, for were it so to do he would inevitably fall into the water and there be drowned. When he has climbed up what he considers a sufficient height from the water, 2ft. perhaps, or possibly 4ft., he tries his stem with vigorous switchings of his body, and if the support is not considered safe he goes down into the water and ascends another; when he is suited he clasps the stem firmly with all six legs, pressing the claws firmly into it with all the weight and muscle he can command, and locking the two front legs fast together.

Now look: he is leaning far back; a thin green line appears in the middle of his back between the wing cases; wider and wider it grows, the whole insect strains to burst the skin which is manifestly too tight for it; now

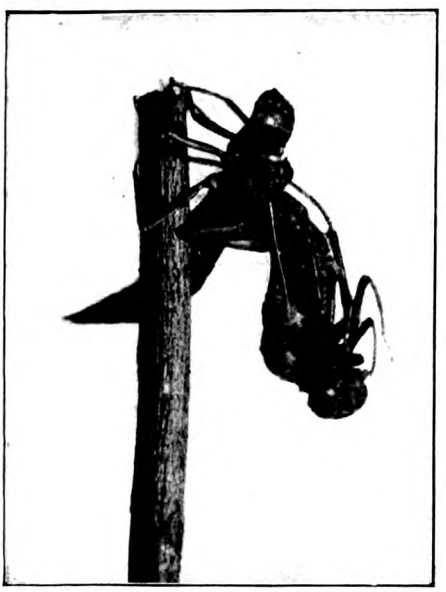
a great back protrudes (Fig. 3) through the opening; farther and farther apart fall the skins of the eyes, and the great goggle eyes themselves are fully out, and the insect now seems to have two heads, one green and the other brown. Now the legs, limp and wet, are drawn out of their envelopes, which still firmly clasp the stem. Now all six legs are out, and two tiny shrivelled wings which give but little promise as yet of their later beauty. And the insect hangs right back, head downwards, resting a moment from its exertions. But there is much to be done yet. First the claws must be cleansed, and these one by one are put into the great mouth and freed from the moisture which remains on them, giving the insect a ludicrous appearance of biting its nails (Fig. 4). At last all are clean and sharp for the next step, and our friend hangs down looking very much exhausted waiting for his back to get some stiffness in it (Fig. 5).



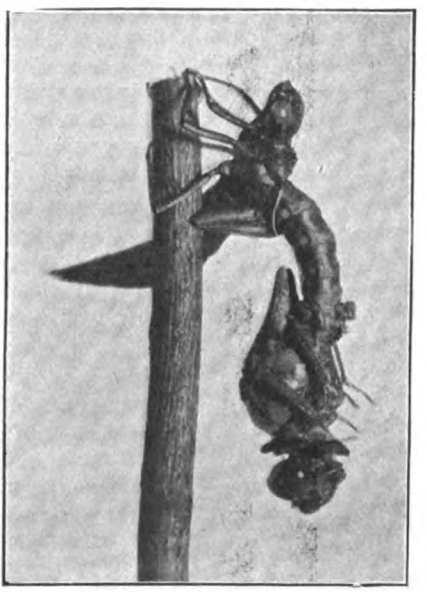
3.—THE NYMPH HAS CLIMBED A TWIG AND BEGINS TO CHANGE.

Then after about ten minutes' rest there comes a surprising feat, which would drive a professional acrobat to despair and an early retirement into private life, for but few are able to jump out of their own skins. Not so our friend, however; quickly raising head and thorax he seizes his own dry nymph skin with all his legs (Fig. 6), and in less than no time has whisked the tail end of his body out of the old skin, and hangs now right way up by his new legs (Fig. 7). And he is very modest over this performance: astonishing as it is, he prefers very much to do it at night, and without spectators, so much so that the photographer almost despaired of getting this particular attitude, and had to call in the aid of a magnesium flash lamp about two o'clock in the morning.

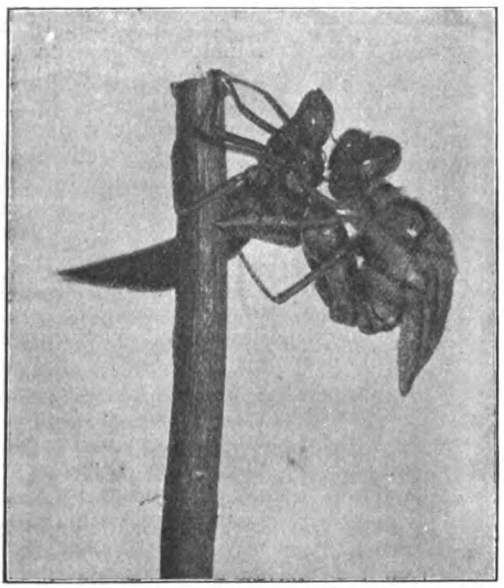
The reason for this preference for coming out at night is clearly that the insect may be ready for flight before it is light, when the birds, who are terrible foes for the first few hours of its new life, are in bed and asleep



4.—"BITING HIS NAILS."



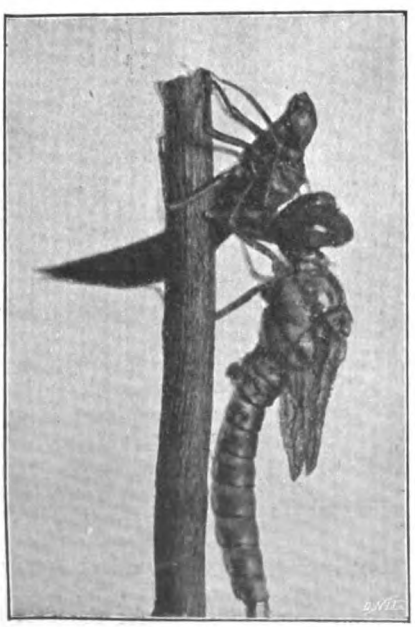
5.—RESTING.



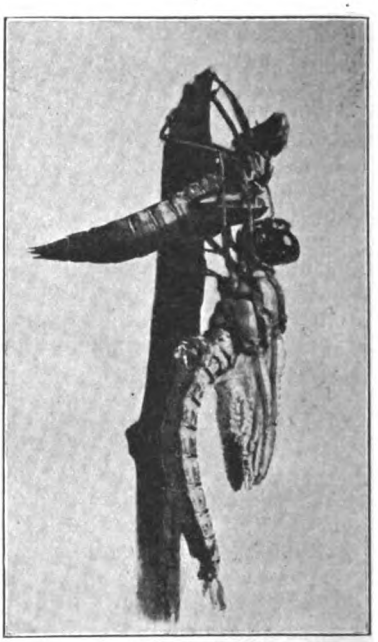
6.—AN ACROBATIC FEAT.

So eager are the birds for this delicacy, and so promptly do they start off in pursuit when the insect is trying its first flight, that the writer, who assisted at the emergence of more than a hundred of this species last year, was almost tempted to think at one time that the sparrows sat outside in rows and waited until the maid opened the study window in the morning and let out the *débutantes* of the previous night; this, however, is only conjecture, and may be a slander on the sparrows.

When the dragon-fly is once hanging by its legs the little crumpled wings immediately begin to expand, and can be seen to lengthen minute by minute (Figs. 8, 9, 10), the body meanwhile taking the exact curve that the wings will afterwards occupy, for the wings are infinitely tender, and must not be touched by anything until they are dry. A rough wind and a waving grass blade would make them bleed and ruin them irretrievably. When it is said that the wings bleed, it is meant that the fluid which fills them exudes and forms a brilliant green blotch like an emerald, beautiful it is true, but when once injured, or when unable to expand equally, the wings never develop properly, and flight becomes impossible.



7.—QUITE OUT.



8.—WINGS EXPANDING.

Here is, indeed, a puzzle. How does our friend know that the body must assume this particular curve? Each one as it comes out does the same and never makes a mistake. Who teaches him to come out at night when the birds are asleep? Who impels him, when first out, to soar up far out of sight, where he is safe from his enemies, until he is strong on the wing and can laugh at them? The birds no doubt take singing lessons from their fathers: there is a half-educated young wood-pigeon in the

9.—WINGS GETTING LONGER.

10.—WINGS FULL SIZE.

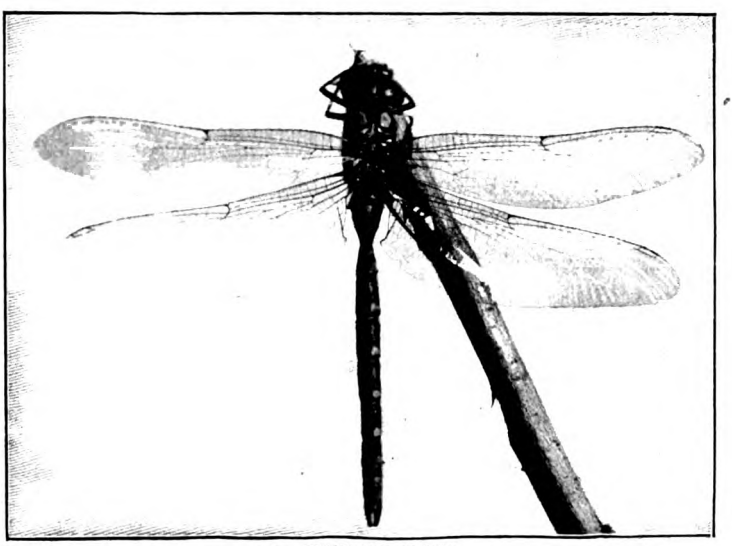
writer's garden who made a shocking exhibition of himself last spring, and could not get hold of his "Tak' two-o-o co-os Taffy-tak" for months. This year, it is to be hoped, he will do better. The birds certainly take lessons in nest-building.

The magpie is the only large bird that has a roof over her nest, and why? She was the first to find out how to build a nest, and called the others around her to teach them how to do it; but they were such exasperatingly cocksure learners, and knew so much before they were told, that she got sick of the whole thing in the middle, and left them to manage the roof as best they could.

The migratory birds presumably teach their young ones the science of meteorology and the use of the globe—who knows? But who teaches the dragon-fly? For taught he undoubtedly is, account for it how we may. No one can watch this transformation scene and doubt that intelligence is at work; but whose intelligence?

His father and mother died the winter before he was born, and he certainly never saw any other of his kind go through his performance; so we will call it inherited instinct, and imagine that we know all about it.

After about four hours from first emerging from the water the dragon-fly is perfect, the wings dry, stiff, and expanded, and the body straight and nearly dry, and ready for his first joy in the sunlight (Fig. 11).



11.—READY FOR FLIGHT.

The Remarkable Case of Miss Tunison.

CASES of invalids who, being deprived of their normal faculties, have with marvellous skill and patience so developed other powers as to supply the deficiency are not rare, and many remarkable instances are related of unfortunates who have triumphed over natural disadvantages and made successes in life.

It is questionable, however, if the annals of medicine can afford a parallel to the remarkable case of Miss Fannie W. Tunison, of Sag Harbour, Long Island, U.S.A. Though absolutely paralyzed in every limb and unable to move either hands or feet the fraction of an inch, nevertheless, this exceptional woman not only earns her own living, sews, embroiders, and writes, but also executes excellent paintings which rival the best efforts of many clever amateurs. And the marvellous part of it is that she accomplishes all this with her tongue.

MISS FANNIE TUNISON.
From a Photograph.

The achievements of the blind, who by developing the sense of touch practically supply the lost sense, or of those who have lost arms and learn to use their feet in the capacity of hands, are entirely eclipsed by the performances of this woman with the abnormally-cultivated teeth and tongue. It has often been said that a woman's most trustworthy weapon is her tongue; but it has been left to Miss Tunison to show the world what a very useful organ the tongue really is.

Thirty years ago she was born, and to the grief of her parents was found to be suffering from a form of infantine paralysis, which totally incapacitated her from using either her arms or legs. Her parents were only poor farmers in a small way of business, and Fannie's affliction not only weighed heavily upon their minds, but upon their pockets as well.

Medical attention was secured, and every effort made to effect a cure, but everything proved unavailing, and she was declared to be a hopeless cripple, without the slightest chance of recovery. A person of less strength of character would have yielded to the misery entailed by this wretched, worthless existence, and aggravated the grief of those around her by falling a victim to despair, misanthropy, and melancholia; but Miss Tunison was made of sterner stuff, and determined that she would not consent to be a burden to her family. By dint of the most painstaking care and patience she gradually developed her tongue and teeth to answer the purpose of all the faculties she lacked. Aided by her mother she has succeeded, and is the wonder of everyone who sees her. Now, in place of being a financial burden, she is the biggest wage-earner of the family, and averages over £200 a year.

Miss Tunison has turned her shortcomings to good account. Deprived of the use of her limbs, she gets along perfectly well with her tongue, and paints, embroiders, and writes a better hand, or rather mouth, than many people who are blessed with the use of their ten digits.

Miss Tunison's work is of no mean order. The pictures that she paints compare favour-

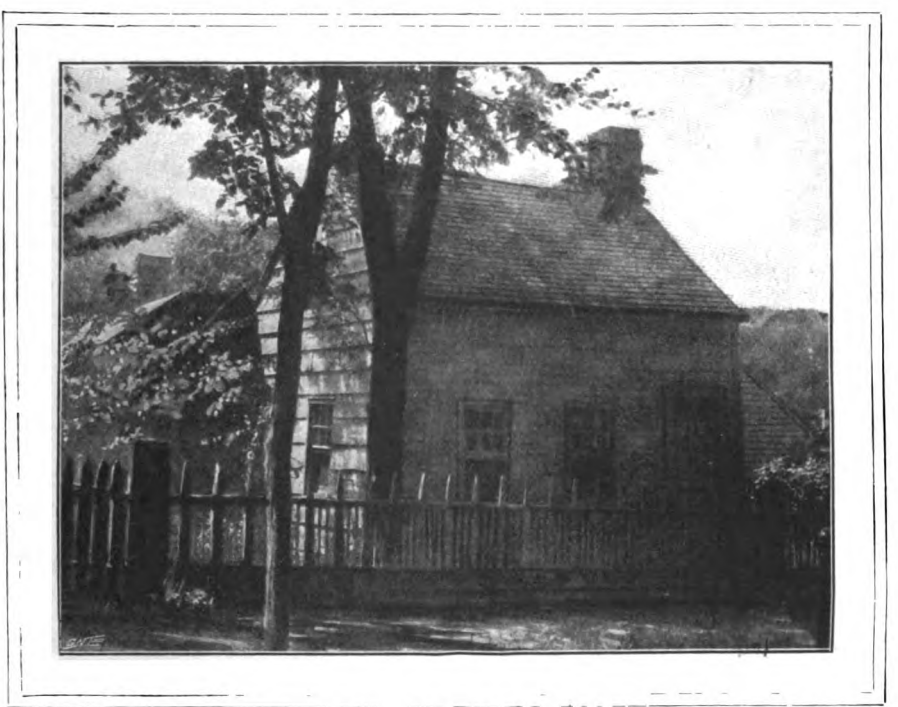
ably with any amateur artist's, and she paints with considerable quickness. So proficient is she at wielding the brush with her tongue that she excels at copying, and she possesses several canvases that would bring credit to any copyist. She is especially good at painting pictures of the Montauk Point Lighthouse, and the little picture, which takes her less than twenty minutes to paint, she sells to visitors for the price of a dollar.

MISS TUNISON PAINTING A PICTURE WITH HER TONGUE.
From a Photograph.

But it is not only as an artist that Miss Tunison shines. She is expert at fancy work as well, and, wonderful as it may seem, she is perfectly able to thread her needle and use the scissors. She never requires the assistance of anybody, and all the work she turns out is done strictly by herself.

When Miss Tunison is at work she is is seated in a chair which has been specially built for her. From the arm of the chair rises a metal rod which supports a small wooden table, and it is upon this table that all the work is done.

In spite of her affliction Fannie always has a cheerful word for visitors; it is her greatest pleasure to receive company, and she is never so happy as when she can show off her wonderful powers. It is during the summer season, when visitors and holiday-seekers swarm down to Sag Harbour, that Fannie is really busy, and the number of orders that pour in keeps her at all times fully occupied.



From a] MISS TUNISON'S COTTAGE AT SAG HARBOUR. [*Photograph.*

In appearance Fannie differs somewhat from the ordinary mortal. Owing to the excessive use of her tongue the muscles of the neck are extremely well developed and stand out thick and prominent. Her eyes, too, have a languid look about them, and

roll, when she speaks, in a peculiar manner. Her speech is thick and heavy, no doubt due to the excessive size of her tongue.

The way that she threads a needle is peculiar. She first holds the needle in her teeth for the purpose of planting it firmly in the wooden table before her. She then takes up the cotton, biting off the length she requires. The next step is to hold the cotton with her lips, which she screws up in a peculiar manner. Then in a trice, before one can say "Jack Robinson," she takes aim at the eye of the needle before her, and ten chances to one the needle is threaded.

She handles the scissors in the same dexterous manner, but the act in which she is really astonishing is the way in which she ties a knot. She places the cotton in her mouth, chews on it seemingly for a little while, appears to swallow it, and then opens her mouth and puts out her tongue. Upon the tongue, if the little operation is successful, is the piece of cotton with two or three knots tied in it.

Miss Tunison was taught entirely by her mother, and it is to her mother's love and care that she attributes her skill. She has had many tempting offers to exhibit herself in museums, but she is perfectly content with the life that she leads, and does not care to make a change. She has lived all her life at Sag Harbour, and has never had a day's sickness. She is a good correspondent, and writes a good "mouth," and has written letters to and received letters from most of the prominent men throughout the Union.

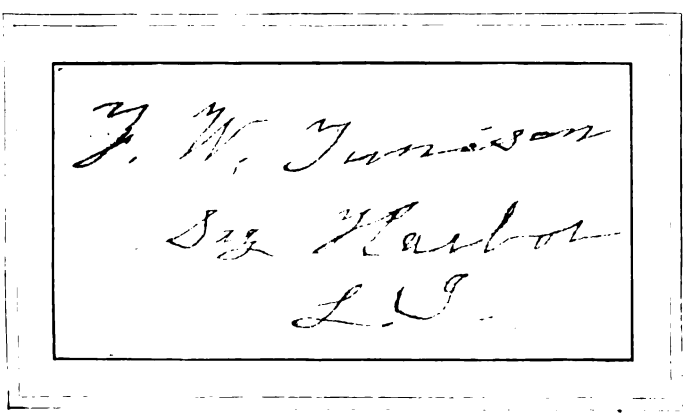
Miss Tunison is in no way deformed; in fact, she is a very good-looking young lady, bright and intelligent, and an excellent conversationalist. She lives with her father and two cousins in a little fisherman's cottage, which was built by her grandfather, who was a seafaring man, and also a soldier of the war of 1812. Her constant companion is her pet dog, Lion McKinley, who loves to sit beside her while she is at work and help her pass away the lonely hours.

Every morning Miss Tunison, who is an early riser, is lifted up by her father into her invalid chair, which has a cleverly constructed work-table attached to it. In this chair she remains throughout the day, held in by a strong band, which also supports her body, which is entirely powerless. In the winter her chair is placed by the front window, so that she can see the people passing along the sidewalk, while in summer she is wheeled out of doors and taken around the village, and everybody in the place knows this young and cheerful invalid.

From the time she is lifted into her chair in the morning until she retires at night she is never idle, as she is engaged in painting pretty book-marks, blotters, embroidery, doilies, mats and tidies, making table-covers and linen outline quilts.

She is very fond of reading, and the latest papers and publications are eagerly devoured by her. When reading she turns the leaves of the books over with her tongue, and places two small lead paper-weights on the pages to keep them in place while she reads. She also has a large correspondence, and she can handle a pencil most dexterously with her tongue.

When writing she uses a pad of paper rather than one sheet, and holds the pencil loosely between her teeth, the tongue guiding it lightly over the paper. Her writing, she confesses, is not altogether Spencerian, though it is perfectly legible.



MISS TUNISON'S SIGNATURE, WRITTEN WITH HER TONGUE.

AN ODD FREAK

BY W. W. Jacobs

"SPEAKING o' money," said the night-watchman, thoughtfully, as he selected an empty soap-box on the wharf for a seat, "the whole world would be different if we all 'ad more of it. It would be a brighter and a 'appier place for everybody."

He broke off to open a small brass tobacco-box and place a little quid of tobacco tenderly into a pouch in his left cheek, critically observing at the same time the efforts of a somewhat large steamer to get alongside the next wharf without blocking up more than three parts of the river. He watched it as though the entire operation depended upon his attention, and, the steamer fast, he turned his eyes back again and resumed his theme.

"Of course it's the being short that sharpens people," he admitted, thoughtfully; "the sharpest man I ever knew never 'ad a ha'penny in 'is pocket, and the ways 'e had o' getting other chaps to pay for 'is beer would ha' made 'is fortin at the law if 'e'd only 'ad the eddication. Playful little chap 'e was. I've seen men wot didn't know 'im stand 'im a pot o' beer and then foller 'im up the road to see 'im knock down a policeman as 'e'd promised. They'd foller 'im to the fust policeman 'e met, an' then 'e'd point them out and say they were goin' to half kill 'im, an' the policeman 'ud just stroll up an' ask 'em wot they were 'anging about for, but I never 'eard of a chap telling 'im. They used to go away struck all of a 'eap. He died in the accident ward of the London Horsepittle, poor chap."

He shook his head thoughtfully, and ignoring the statement of the watchman at the next wharf that it was a fine evening, shifted his quid and laughed rumblingly.

"The funniest way o' raising the wind I ever 'eard of," he said, in explanation, "was one that 'appened about fifteen years ago. I'd just taken my discharge as A.B. from the *North Star*, trading between here and the Australian ports, and the men wot the thing 'appened to was shipmates o' mine, although on'y firemen.

"I know it's a true story, becos I was in it a little bit myself, and the other part I 'ad from all of 'em, and besides, they didn't see anything funny in it at all, or anything out of

the way. It seemed to them quite a easy way o' making money, and I dessay if it 'ad come off all right I should have thought so too.

"In about a week arter we was paid off at the Albert Docks these chaps was all cleaned out, and they was all in despair with a thirst wot wasn't half-quenched, and a spree wot was on'y in a manner o' speaking just begun, and at the end of that time they came round to a room wot I 'ad, to see wot could be done. There was four of 'em in all: old Sam Small, Ginger Dick, Peter Russet, and a orphan nevy of Sam's whose father and mother was dead. The mother 'ad been 'alf nigger an' 'alf Malay when she was living, and Sam was always pertickler careful to point out that his nevy took arter 'er. It was enough to make the pore woman turn in 'er grave to say so, but Sam used to say that 'e owed it to 'is brother to explain.

"'Wot's to be done?' ses Peter Russet, arter they'd all said wot miserable chaps they was, an' 'ow badly sailormen was paid. 'We're all going to sign on in the *Land's End*, but she doesn't sail for a fortnight; wot's to be done in the meantime for to live?'

"'There's your watch, Peter,' ses old Sam, dreamy-like, 'and there's Ginger's ring. It's a good job you kep' that ring, Ginger. We're all in the same boat, mates, an' I on'y wish as I'd got something for the general good. It's 'aving an orphan nevy wot's kep' me pore.'

"'Stow it,' ses the nevy, short-like.

"'Everything's agin us,' ses old Sam. 'There's them four green parrots I brought from Brazil, all dead.'

"'So are my two monkeys,' ses Peter Russet, shaking 'is 'ead; 'they used to sleep with me, too.'

"They all shook their 'eads then, and Russet took Sam up very sharp for saying that p'r'aps if he 'adn't slep' with the monkeys they wouldn't ha' died. He said if Sam knew more about monkeys than wot 'e did, why didn't 'e put 'is money in them instead o' green parrots wot pulled their feathers out and died of cold.

"'[illegible] king about monkeys,' ses Ginger Dick, interrupting old Sam suddenly, 'wot about young Beauty here?'

"'Well, wot about him?' says the nevy, in a nasty sort o' way.

"'W'y, 'e's worth forty monkeys an' millions o' green parrots,' ses Ginger, starting up; 'an' here 'e is a-wasting of 'is opportunities, going about dressed like a Christian. Open your mouth, Beauty, and stick your tongue out and roll your eyes a bit.'

"'W'y not leave well alone, Ginger?' ses Russet, and I thought so too. Young Beauty was quite enough for me without that.

"'Ter 'blige me,' ses Ginger, anxiously, 'just make yourself as ugly as wot you can, Beauty.'

"'Leave 'im alone,' ses old Sam, as his nevy snarled at 'em. 'You ain't everybody's money yourself, Ginger.'

"'I tell you, mates,' ses Ginger, speaking very slow and solemn, 'there's a fortin' in 'im. I was lookin' at 'im just now, trying to think who 'e reminded me of. At fust I thought it was that big stuffed monkey we saw at Melbourne, then I suddenly remembered it was a wild man of Borneo I see when I was a kid up in Sunderland. When I say 'e was a 'andsome, good-'arted looking gentleman alongside o' you, Beauty, do you begin to get my meaning?'

"'Wot's the idea, Ginger?' ses Sam, getting up to lend me and Russet a 'and with 'is nevy.

"'My idea is this,' ses Ginger: 'take 'is cloes off 'im and dress 'im up in that there winder-blind, or something o' the kind; tie 'im up with a bit o' line, and take 'im round to Ted Reddish in the 'Ighway and sell 'im for a 'undered quid as a wild man o' Borneo.'

"'*Wot?*' screams Beauty, in an awful voice. 'Let go, Peter; let go, d'ye hear?'

"'Old your noise, Beauty, while your elders is speaking,' ses 'is uncle, and I could see 'e was struck with the idea.

"'You jest try dressing me up in a winder-blind,' ses his nevy, half crying with rage.

"'Listen to reason, Beauty,' ses Ginger; 'you'll 'ave your share of the tin; it'll only be for a day or two, and then when we've cleared out you can make your escape, and there'll be twenty-five pounds for each of us.'

"'Ow do you make that out, Ginger?' ses Sam, in a cold voice.

"'Fours into a 'undered,' ses Ginger.

"'Ho,' ses Sam. 'Ho, indeed. I wasn't aweer that 'e was your nevy, Ginger.'

"'Share and share alike,' ses Russet. 'It's a very good plan o' yours, Ginger.'

"Ginger holds 'is 'ead up and looks at 'im 'ard.

"'I thought o' the plan,' 'e ses, speaking very slow and deliberate. 'Sam's 'is uncle, and 'e's the wild man. Three's into a 'undered go——'

"'You needn't bother your fat 'ead adding up sums, Ginger,' ses Russet, very polite. 'I'm going to 'ave my share; else I'll split to Ted Reddish.'

"None of 'em said a word about me: two of 'em was sitting on my bed; Ginger was using a 'ankerchief o' mine wot 'e found in the fireplace, and Peter Russet 'ad 'ad a drink out o' the jug on my washstand, and yet they never even mentioned me. That's firemen all over, and that's 'ow it is they get themselves so disliked.

"It took 'em best part of an 'our to talk round young Beauty, an' the langwidge they see fit to use made me thankful to think that the parrots didn't live to larn it.

"You never saw anything like Beauty when they 'ad finished with 'im. If 'e was bad in 'is cloes, 'e was a perfeck horror without 'em. Ginger Dick faked 'im up beautiful, but there was no pleasing 'im. Fust he found fault with the winder-blind, which 'e said didn't fit; then 'e grumbled about going bare-foot, then 'e wanted somethink to 'ide 'is legs, which was natural considering the shape of 'em. Ginger Dick nearly lost 'is temper with 'im, and it was all old Sam could do to stop himself from casting 'im off for ever. He was finished at last, and arter Peter Russet 'ad slipped downstairs and found a bit o' broken clothes-prop in the yard, and 'e'd been shown 'ow to lean on it and make a noise, Ginger said as 'ow if Ted Reddish got 'im for a 'undered pounds 'e'd get 'im a bargain.

"'We must 'ave a cab,' ses old Sam.

"'Cab?' ses Ginger. 'What for?'

"'We should 'ave half Wapping following us,' ses Sam. 'Go out and put your ring up, Ginger, and fetch a cab.'

"Ginger started grumbling, but he went, and presently came back with the cab and the money, and they all went downstairs leading the wild man by a bit o' line. They only met one party coming up, and 'e seemed to remember somethink 'e'd forgotten wot ought to be fetched at once.

"Ginger went out fust and opened the cab-door, and then stood there waiting becos at the last moment the wild man said the winder-blind was slipping down. They got 'im out at last, but before 'e could get in the cab was going up the road at ten miles an hour, with Ginger 'anging on to the door calling to it to stop.

"EVERY NOW AND THEN THEY'D GET THE WILD MAN 'ARF OUT."

"It came back at about a mile an' a 'alf an hour, an' the remarks of the cabman was eggstrordinary. Even when he got back 'e wouldn't start till 'e'd got double fare paid in advance; but they got in at last and drove off.

"There was a fine scene at Ted Reddish's door. Ginger said that if there was a bit of a struggle it would be a good advertisement for Ted Reddish, and they might p'r'aps get more than a 'undered, and all the three of 'em could do, they couldn't get the wild man out o' that cab, and the cabman was hopping about 'arf crazy. Every now and then they'd get the wild man 'arf out, and then he'd get in agin and snarl. 'E didn't seem to know when to leave off, and Ginger and the others got almost as sick of it as the cabman. It must ha' taken two years' wear out o' that cab, but they got 'im out at last, and Reddish's door being open to see what the row was about, they went straight in.

"'Wot's all this?' ses Reddish, who was a tall, thin man, with a dark moustache.

"'It's a wild man o' Borneo,' ses Ginger, panting; 'we caught 'im in a forest in Brazil, an' we've come 'ere to give you the fust offer.'

"Ted Reddish was so surprised 'e couldn't speak at fust. The wild man seemed to take 'is breath away, and 'e looked in a 'elpless kind o' way at 'is wife, who'd just come down. She was a nice-lookin' woman, fat, with a lot o' yeller hair, and she smiled at 'em as though she'd known 'em all their lives.

"'Come into the parlour,' she ses, kindly, just as Ted was beginning to get 'is breath.

"They followed 'em in, and the wild man was just going to make hisself comfortable in a easy chair, when Ginger give 'im a look, an' 'e curled up on the 'earthrug instead.

"''E ain't a very fine specimen,' ses Ted Reddish, at last.

"'It's the red side-whiskers I don't like,' ses his wife. 'Besides, who ever 'eard of a wild man in a collar an' necktie?'

"'You've got hold o' the wrong one,' ses Ted Reddish, afore Ginger Dick could speak up for hisself.

"'Oh, I beg your pardin,' ses Mrs. Reddish to Ginger, very polite. 'I thought it was funny a wild man should be wearing a collar. It's my mistake. That's the wild man, I s'pose, on the 'earthrug?'

"'That's 'im, mum,' ses old Sam, very short.

"'He don't look wild enough,' ses Reddish.

"'No; e's much too tame,' ses 'is wife, shaking her yeller curls.

"The chaps all looked at each other then, and the wild man began to think it was time he did somethink; and the nearest thing 'andy being Ginger's leg, 'e put 'is teeth into it. *Anybody* might ha' thought Ginger was the wild man then, the way 'e went on, and Mrs. Reddish said that even if he so far forgot hisself as to use sich langwidge afore 'er, 'e oughtn't to before a poor 'eathen animal.

"'How much do you want for 'im?' ses Ted Reddish, arter Ginger 'ad got 'is leg away, and taken it to the winder to look at it.

"'One 'undered pounds,' ses old Sam.

"Ted Reddish looked at 'is wife, and they both larfed as though they'd never leave orf.

"'Why, the market price o' the best wild men is only thirty shillings,' ses Reddish, wiping 'is eyes. 'I'll give you a pound for 'im.'

"Old Sam looked at Russet, and Russet looked at Ginger, and then *they* all larfed.

"'Well, there's no getting over you, I can see that,' ses Reddish, at last. 'Is he strong?'

"'Strong? Strong ain't the word for it,' ses Sam.

"'Bring 'im to the back and let 'im 'ave a wrestle with one o' the brown bears, Ted,' ses 'is wife.

"''E'd kill it,' ses old Sam, hastily.

"'Never mind,' ses Reddish, getting up; 'brown bears is cheap enough.'

"They all got up then, none of 'em knowing wot to do, except the wild man, that is, and *he* got 'is arms tight round the leg o' the table.

"'Well,' ses Ginger, 'we'll be pleased for 'im to wrestle with the bear, but we must 'ave the 'undered quid fust, in case 'e injures 'isself a little.'

"Ted Reddish looked 'ard at 'im, and then he looked at 'is wife agin.

"'I'll just go outside and talk it over with the missus,' he ses at last, and they both got up and went out.

"'It's all right,' ses old Sam, winking at Ginger.

"'Fair cop,' ses Ginger, who was still rubbing his leg. 'I told you it would be, but there's no need for Beauty to overdo it. He nearly 'ad a bit out o' my leg.'

"'A'right,' ses the wild man, shifting along the 'earth-rug to where Peter was sitting; 'but it don't do for me to be too tame. You 'eard wot she said.'

"'How are you feeling, old man?' ses

Peter, in a kind voice, as 'e tucked 'is legs away under 'is chair.

"'Gurr,' ses the wild man, going on all fours to the back of the chair, 'gur—wug—wug——"

"'Don't play the fool, Beauty,' ses Peter, with a uneasy smile, as he twisted 'is 'ead round. 'Call 'im off, Sam.'

"'Gurr,' ses the wild man, sniffing at 'is legs; 'gurr.'

"'Easy on, Beauty, it's no good biting 'im till they come back,' ses old Sam.

"'I won't be bit at all,' ses Russet, very sharp, 'mind that, Sam. It's my belief Beauty's gone mad.'

"'Hush,' ses Ginger, and they 'eard Ted Reddish and 'is wife coming back. They came in, sat down agin, and after Ted 'ad 'ad another good look at the wild man and prodded 'im all over an' looked at 'is teeth, he spoke up and said they'd decided to give a 'undered pun for 'im at the end o' three days if 'e suited.

"'I s'pose,' ses Sam, looking at the others, 'that we could 'ave a bit of it now to go on with?'

wild man started on Russet's leg and was pulled off by Sam and Ginger, 'where to put 'im.'

"'Why not put 'im in with the black leopard?' ses her 'usband.

"'There's plenty o' room in his cage,' says 'is wife, thoughtfully, 'and it 'ud be company for 'im too.'

"'I don't think the wild man 'ud like that,' ses Ginger.

"'I'm sartain sure 'e wouldn't,' says old Sam, shaking 'is 'ed.

"'Well, we must put 'im in a cage by hisself, I s'pose,' ses Reddish, 'but we can't be put to much expense. I'm sure the money we spent in cat's meat for the last wild man we 'ad was awful.'

"'Don't you spend too much money on cat's meat for *'im*,' ses Sam, ''e'd very likely leave it. Bringing 'im 'ome, we used to give 'im the same as we 'ad ourselves, and he got on all right.'

"'It's a wonder you didn't kill 'im,' ses Reddish, severely. 'He'll be fed very different 'ere, I can tell you. You won't know 'im at the end o' three days.'

"IT WAS PRETTY TO SEE THE WAY WILLIAM 'ANDLED 'IM."

"'It's agin our way of doing business,' ses Ted Reddish. 'If it 'ud been a lion or a tiger we could, but wild men we never do.'

"'The thing is,' ses Mrs. Reddish, as the

"'Don't change 'im too sudden,' ses Ginger, keeping 'is 'ead turned away from the wild man, wot wos trying to catch 'is eye. 'Cook 'is food at fust, 'cos 'e's been used to it.'

"'I know wot to give 'im,' ses Reddish, off-handedly. 'I ain't been in the line twenty-seven years for nothink. Bring 'im out to the back, an' I'll put 'im in 'is new 'ome.'

"They all got up and, taking no notice of the wild man's whispers, follered Ted Reddish and 'is wife out to the back, where all the wild beasts in the world seemed to 'ave collected to roar out to each other what a beastly place it was.

"'I'm going to put 'im in "'Appy Cottage" for a time,' says Reddish; 'lend a hand 'ere, William,' he says, beckoning to one of 'is men.

"'Is *that* "'Appy Cottage"?' ses old Sam, sniffing, as they got up to a nasty, empty cage with a chain and staple in the wall.

"Ted Reddish said it was.

"'Wot makes you call it that?' ses Sam.

"Reddish didn't seem to 'ear 'im, and it took all Ginger's coaxing to get Beauty to go in.

"'It's on'y for a day or two,' he whispers.

"'But 'ow am I to escape when you've got the brass?' ses the wild man.

"'We'll look arter that,' ses Ginger, who 'adn't got the least idea.

"The wild man 'ad a little show for the last time, jist to impress Ted Reddish, an' it was pretty to see the way William 'andled 'im. The look on the wild man's face showed as 'ow it was a revelashun to 'im. Then 'is three mates took a last look at 'im and went off.

"For the fust day Sam felt uneasy about 'im, and used to tell us tales about 'is dead brother which made us think Beauty was lucky to take arter 'is mother; but it wore off, and the next night, in the Admiral Cochrane, 'e put 'is 'ead on Ginger's shoulder, and wep' for 'appiness as 'e spoke of 'is nevy's home at "'Appy Cottage.'

"On the third day Sam was for going round in the morning for the money, but Ginger said it wasn't advisable to show any 'aste; so they left it to the evening, and Peter Russet wrote Sam a letter signed 'Barnum,' offering 'im two 'undered for the wild man, in case Ted Reddish should want to beat 'em down. They all 'ad a drink before they went in, and was smiling with good temper to sich an extent that they 'ad to wait a minute to get their faces straight afore going in.

"'Come in,' ses Reddish, and they follered 'im into the parler, where Mrs. Reddish was sitting in a arm-chair shaking 'er 'ed and looking at the carpet very sorrowful.

"'I was afraid you'd come,' she ses, in a low voice.

"'So was I,' ses Reddish.

"'What for?' ses old Sam. It didn't look much like money, and 'e felt cross.

"'We've 'ad a loss,' ses Mrs. Reddish. She touched 'erself, and then they see she was all in black, and that Ted Reddish was wearing a black tie and a bit o' crape round 'is arm.

"'Sorry to 'ear it, mum,' ses old Sam.

"'It was very sudden, too,' ses Mrs. Reddish, wiping 'er eyes.

"'That's better than laying long,' ses Peter Russet, comforting like.

"Ginger Dick gives a cough. 'Twenty-five pounds was wot *'e'd* come for; not to 'ear this sort o' talk.'

"'We've been in the wild-beast line seven-an'-twenty years,' ses Mrs. Reddish, 'and it's the fust time anythink of this sort 'as 'appened.'

"''Ealthy family, I s'pose,' ses Sam, staring.

"'Tell 'im, Ted,' ses Mrs. Reddish, in a 'usky whisper.

"'No, you,' ses Ted.

"'It's your place,' ses Mrs. Reddish.

"'A woman can break it better,' ses 'er 'usband.

"'Tell us wot?' ses Ginger, very snappish.

"Ted Reddish cleared 'is throat.

"'It wasn't our fault,' he ses, slowly, while Mrs. Reddish began to cry agin: 'gin'rally speakin', animals is afraid o' wild men, and night before last, as the wild man wot you left on approval didn't seem to like "'Appy Cottage," we took 'im out an' put 'im in with the tiger.'

"'Put him in with the WOT?' ses the unfortnit man's uncle, jumping off 'is chair.

"'The tiger,' ses Reddish. 'We 'eard something in the night, but we thought they was only 'aving a little bit of a tiff, like. In the morning I went down with a bit o' cold meat for the wild man, and I thought at first he'd escaped; but looking a little bit closer——'

"'Don't, Ted,' ses 'is wife. 'I can't bear it.'

"'Do you mean to tell me that the tiger 'as eat 'im?' screams old Sam.

"'Most of 'im,' ses Ted Reddish; 'but 'e couldn't ha' been much of a wild man to let a tiger get the better of 'im. I must say I was surprised.'

"'We both was,' ses Mrs. Reddish, wiping 'er eyes.

"You might ha' 'eard a pin drop; old Sam's eyes was large and staring, Peter Russet was sucking 'is teeth, an' Ginger was wondering wot the law would say to it—if it 'eard of it.

"'Ho!' says Sam. 'Ho! is it? We want a 'undered quid off of you; an' wot's more, we mean to 'ave it.'

"'But the tiger's ate 'im,' says Mrs. Reddish, explaining.

"'I know that,' ses Sam, sharply. 'But 'e was our wild man, and we want to be paid

"DO YOU MEAN TO TELL ME THAT THE TIGER 'AS EAT 'IM?"

"'It's an unfortunit thing for all parties,' ses Ted Reddish at last, getting up and standing on the 'earthrug.

"'Orrible,' ses Sam, 'uskily. 'You ought to ha' known better than to put 'im in with a tiger. Wot could you expect? W'y, it was a mad thing to do.'

"'Crool thing,' ses Peter Russet.

"'You don't know the bisness properly,' ses Ginger, 'that's about wot it is. W'y, *I* should ha' known better than that.'

"'Well it's no good making a fuss about it,' ses Reddish. 'It was only a wild man arter all, and he'd ha' died anyway, cos 'e wouldn't eat the raw meat we gave 'im, and 'is pan o' water was scarcely touched. He'd ha' starved himself anyhow. I'm sorry, as I said before, but I must be off; I've got an appointment down at the docks.'

"He moved towards the door; Ginger Dick gave Russet a nudge and whispered something, and Russet passed it on to Sam.

"'What about the 'undered quid?' ses pore Beauty's uncle, catching 'old o' Reddish as 'e passed 'im.

"'Eh?' ses Reddish, surprised—'Oh, that's off.'

for 'im. You should ha' been more careful. We'll give you five minutes; and if the money ain't paid by that time, we'll go straight off to the police-station.'

"'Well, go,' ses Ted Reddish.

"Sam got up, very stern, and looked at Ginger.

"'You'll be ruined if we do,' ses Ginger.

"'All right,' ses Ted Reddish, comfortably.

"'I'm not sure they can't 'ang you,' ses Russet.

"'I ain't sure, either,' says Reddish; 'and I'd like to know 'ow the law stands, in case it 'appens agin.'

"'Come on, Sam,' ses Ginger; 'come straight to the police-station.'

"He got up, and moved towards the door. Ted Reddish didn't move a muscle, but Mrs. Reddish flopped on her knees and caught old Sam round the legs, and 'eld him so's 'e couldn't move.

"'Spare 'im,' she ses, crying.

"'Lea' go o' my legs, mum,' ses Sam.

"'Come on, Sam,' ses Ginger; 'come to the police.'

"Old Sam made a desperit effort, and

Mrs. Reddish called 'im a crool monster, and let go and 'id 'er face on 'er husband's shoulder as they all moved out of the parlour, larfing like a mad thing with hysterics.

"They moved off slowly, not knowing wot to do, as, of course, they knew they daren't go to the police about it. Ginger Dick's temper was awful; but Peter Russet said they mustn't give up all 'ope—he'd write to Ted Reddish and tell 'im as a friend wot a danger 'e was in. Old Sam didn't say anything, the loss of his nevy and twenty-five pounds at the same time being almost more than 'is 'art could bear, and in a slow, melancholy fashion they walked back to old Sam's lodgings.

"'Well, what the blazes is up now?' ses Ginger Dick, as they turned the corner.

"There was three or four 'undered people standing in front of the 'ouse, and women's 'eads out of all the winders screaming their 'ardest for the police, and as they got closer they 'eard a incessant knocking. It took 'em nearly five minutes to force their way through the crowd, and then they nearly went crazy as they saw the wild man with 'alf the winder-blind missing, but otherwise well and 'arty, standing on the step and giving rat-a-tat-tats at the door for all 'e was worth.

"They never got to know the rights of it, Beauty getting so excited every time they asked 'im 'ow he got on that they 'ad to give it up. But they began to 'ave a sort of idea at last that Ted Reddish 'ad been 'aving a game with 'em, and that Mrs. Reddish was worse than wot 'e was."

The Most Extraordinary Dinner on Earth.

By Albert H. Broadwell. Photographs by A. J. Johnson.

AN ELDERLY GENTLEMAN AND A PREPOSSESSING LADY ENTER THE DINING-ROOM.

WAITERS are proverbially clever; in fact, they are mostly too clever for anything or anybody. The man who ever gets the better of a waiter has yet to be found. Not that waiters are not human after all, and who would blame them?—but they have a sublime way of juggling with your change, and in such a way, too, that would have you believe that coppers were withdrawn from circulation for the time being.

There are two waiters *par excellence* who claim special notice at our hands at present. There is no half-and-half way about them; they take the cake, the biscuit, the pancake, the bun, the wedding cake, and the champion cake all in one. There is a swing about them that is pleasing—at a distance! They catch and throw, and juggle and throw, and catch and throw again; sometimes they miss, and then there's a crash and a bang, and the fragments of plates and glasses fly like chaff in the wind.

They are stage waiters, and form part of a group of four clever performers who go by the name of The Rambler Troupe, and their ramblings have taken them to most parts of the habitable globe, to the intense enjoyment of thousands of people.

It has been the writer's good fortune to witness the Ramblers' clever act at the Alhambra Theatre, Leicester Square, and he has much pleasure in acknowledging herewith the courteous assistance of Messrs. Dundas Slater and E. A. Pickering, the able

CATCHES THE VISITOR'S HAT ON HIS HEAD.

THE GUEST LAYS HIS CIGAR ON A TABLE.

managers of one of the best places of amusement in London, in obtaining this photographic interview for the special benefit of STRAND readers.

The photographs as shown in this article are exact reproductions of the doings that take place on the stage; it is a pity that much of the actual movement is lost, but then we cannot claim to run cinematograph pictures through the pages of a magazine. These snap-shots, however, will convey in some measure the marvellous proceedings which take place in the course of this the most extraordinary dinner on earth.

An elderly gentleman and a lady of prepossessing appearance enter the dining-room of a restaurant. They are received by two waiters of the most approved and up-to-date type; their names, *pro tem.*, will be Garçon No. 1 and Garçon No. 2. Garçon No. 1 takes upon himself the onerous task of unloading the happy pair of their coats, stick, and fan; with an artful twist he throws up the gentleman's hat (whilst the latter isn't looking) and catches it on the back of his head in the most comical manner. These preliminaries are shown in our pictures on the preceding page.

Now, however, they are entering upon a more serious phase of the business. It is proverbially difficult to do two things properly at one and the same time, so that our worthy guest places a half-smoked Havana of the finest brand upon the edge of a small table close by. The waiters spot this, of course, and there's a rush for the coveted weed.

Garçon No. 2 makes a dash, but misses. Garçon No. 1 quickly picks up table and all and by an artful twist, and an equally artful jerk, he throws the cigar up into the air and catches it in his open mouth with the consummate skill of an expert juggler. Result: Consternation of Garçon No. 2.

GARÇON NO. 1 THROWS THE CIGAR FROM THE TABLE INTO HIS MOUTH.

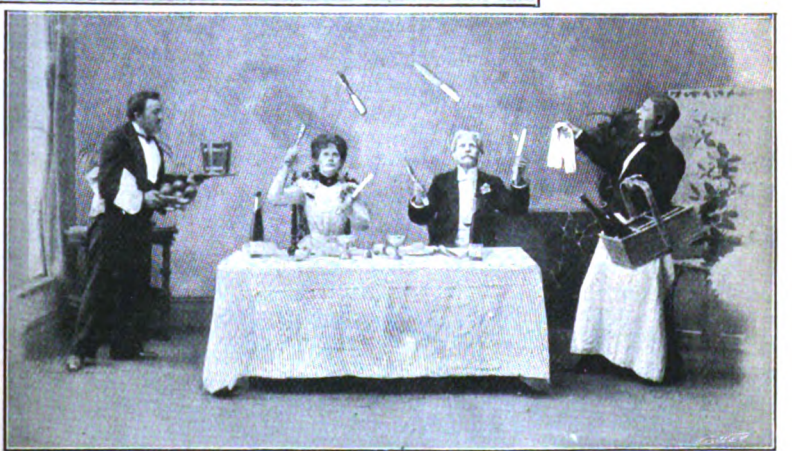
UP GO THE LAMPS—

In the meantime our guests have taken their places, but somehow the pretty but cumbersome standard lamps, with their gorgeous shades of flaming red silk, are found to be in the way.

"Here, garçon, remove those lamps, will you?"

"Yes, sir," comes from both attendants, simultaneously, and no sooner said than done: quicker than lightning those lamps fly right up to the ceiling and are caught again and placed aside, to the horror and amazement of the diners!

It is the waiters' turn to be startled, however, for no sooner have they returned with the necessaries "to follow" than the lady does a little juggling of her own.



—AND THE KNIVES, FORKS, AND SPOONS.

Up go the serviettes, to the consternation of Garçons 1 and 2, who are fairly caught at their own game.

The example seems contagious; certain gentlemen have opinions of their own about themselves, and they are often prone to think that, if one of the

—AND THE SERVIETTES—

ENTER THE SOUP!

weaker sex should happen to be on the high road to supremacy, she should be quickly suppressed or put into her proper place; so up go the gentleman's knives and forks and spoons in a rush. He has quite forgotten his dinner: he *will* show his fair partner that *she* is by no means the only pebble on the beach. No, there are others, and he is one of them. But, lo! *her* knives and *her* spoons and *her* forks follow *his* knives, *his* spoons, and *his* forks in rapid succession. In fact, it is a case of a knife for a knife and a spoon for a spoon!

The waiters are happy: here at

IT SPINS ON THE HANDLE OF THE SOUP LADLE.

EXIT THE SOUP!

last they have met with a pair worthy of their steel! No. 1 is jubilant; No. 2 tries to look like it.

"Enough, enough; soup, waiter, do you hear? Bring the soup, or I'll wipe the floor with you."

"Clear or thick?"

"*Clear*, and be quick about it," comes the stinging reply.

There is a lull

THE COINS DISAPPEAR INTO HIS WAISTCOAT POCKET.

and a hush, a dead silence creeps over an overstrung audience. What-*ever* is going to happen now?

Whoop—brr—bang! Enter the soup! It flies from one side of the room to the other, from one pair of hands into another pair of hands. Flop! Has he missed it? No, he smiles and bows and scrapes and "Clear or thick, madam?" in a whisper, follows what promised to be an exciting episode. It is an anti-climax such as we meet with every day.

The lid is removed and a cloud of steam rises to the ceiling. It is soup, real soup, and spectators gaze aghast. After all, "the proof of the soup is in the steaming."

Whoop—brr—bang! Out goes the soup! Back it flies the way it came, over the heads of the guests on to the very tip of the soup ladle, where it whirrs and twists fast enough to be turned into ice-cream, if only the motion lasted long enough.

The dinner proper is nearly over by this time, and the bill is duly presented. With a flourish and much twisting of the silver dish in his right hand Garçon No. 2 approaches timidly. He nearly drops the dish on to the gentleman's head, recovers himself in time, smiles, and gets a splendid tip for the quiet way in which he and his friend have performed their duties.

Proverbially suspicious, Garçon No. 1 approaches from behind and is on the point of seizing what seems to him a fair share of the profits, when, with a dexterous jerk, up go the coins, to disappear, in a glittering shower, into the waistcoat pocket of Garçon No. 2.

It seems that juggling, like many other diseases, is contagious in the extreme. I knew a young fellow, smart in his way, who would insist upon showing me how to spirit a penny by means of a handkerchief, an overcoat, a silk hat, and a perambulator. He was so engrossed in finding the latter that I conveniently disappeared, and soon breathed once

THE BOTTLES KEEP TIME TO A WALTZ.

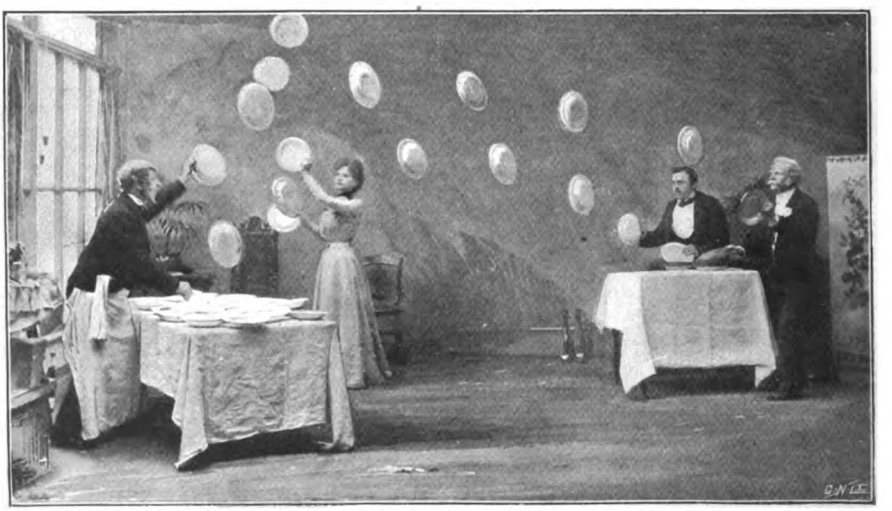
TWENTY ORANGES ON THE MOVE.

more the fresh air of my old-world suburban rose-garden. I used to think that juggling as a fine art might pay, but I gave it up after that.

Not so our friends; but, then, they are professionals. Watch their bottle performance and listen to the tick-tack, bang-bang, tick-tack, bang-bang as the lower edges of their bottles keep time on the edge of the dining table to the tune of a popular waltz.

Not content with juggling all the available bottles, they unite in thorough good fellowship, and we see them enjoying themselves with oranges, of all things! Twenty oranges are on the move in rhythmical progression, and a very pretty sight it is too.

These are quickly put by, though, and now comes one of the most extraordinary features of the evening. True to their profession our waiters, assisted by their guests, quickly proceed in clearing the remains of the feast, and here Garçon No. 1 comes in with a vengeance. His late guests and Garçon No. 2 have before them two piles of plates, numbering something like a hundred altogether. These have evidently to be transferred from one table to another. Whirr—whizz—whirr—whizz — follow each other for quite thirty seconds, while the plates fly from one table to another with amazing swiftness.



REMOVING THE PLATES.

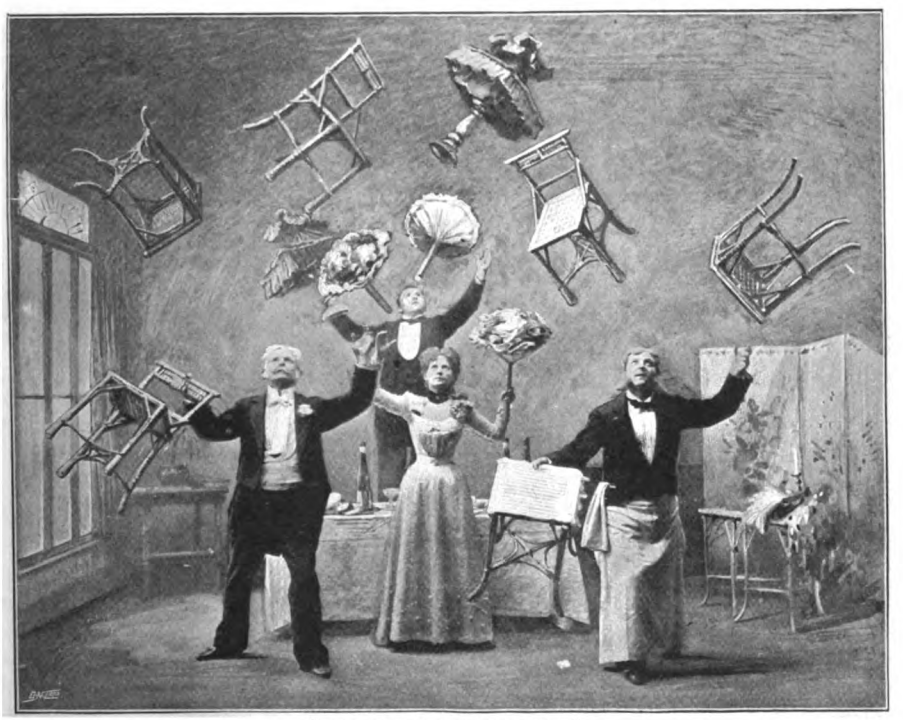
Garçon No. 1 catches them in their flight and places them on the table before him, without missing so much as a solitary one.

It is awful to contemplate what might happen should the unfortunate man miss a couple, or even one, of the delicate missiles as they come in quick succession.

The bottles are gone, the fruit is gone, the plates are gone: there are only the tables, and chairs, and lamps, and flowers left. Hurrah! Up goes a chair, then a table, then a lamp, and a bouquet. Then more chairs and more tables, and more lamps and more bouquets. They fly all over the room. The air is thick with them. Yet not one is missed. They all come back to their owners in due course. The Ramblers are clever — very clever, in fact, and they are genuinely funny and amusing.

There is a menu provided, but this, of course, is for private circulation only. We caught a glimpse of it, and glimpses are all you can reasonably expect, considering the rate at which these good people dine. We here give a few of the items that form part of the bill of fare provided for the occasion:—

Hors d'Œuvres.
Sardines on the Wing. Slippery Olives.
Anchovies quickly.
Soup.
First clear, then thick, à la whoop—brr—bang—flop!
Fish.
Poisson d'avril à la flying salmon.
Entrées.
Anyhow on toast.
Joint.
Roast beef, mashed out of shape à la squashed.
Roast.
Flying roosters à la Lee-Metford.
Bullet-proof Yorkshire pudding.
Salad.
Let-us-go! and other kinds ad lib.
Sweets.
Blanc mange all over the place.
Cheese.
Emilezola. Petits Suisses. Stilton à la Hurry.
Glaces.
Bombs Glencoe and Modder. Shrapnel Special.
Coffee quick as lightning, etc.



"THE AIR IS THICK WITH THEM."

A Widow of the Santa Ana Valley.

By Bret Harte.

THE Widow Wade was standing at her bedroom window, staring out in that vague instinct which compels humanity in moments of doubt and perplexity to seek this change of observation for superior illumination. Not that Mrs. Wade's disturbance was of a serious character. She had passed the acute stage of widowhood by at least two years, and the slight redness of her soft eyelids, as well as the droop of her pretty mouth, were merely the recognised outward and visible signs of the grievously-minded religious community in which she lived. The mourning she still wore was also partly in conformity with the sad-coloured garments of her neighbours and the necessities of the rainy season. She was in comfortable circumstances, the mistress of a large ranch in the valley, which had lately become more valuable by the extension of a waggon road through its centre. She was simply worrying whether she should go to a "sociable," ending with a dance—a daring innovation of some strangers — at the new hotel, or continue to eschew such follies that were, according to local belief, unsuited to "a vale of tears."

Indeed, at this moment the prospect she gazed abstractedly upon seemed to justify that lugubrious description. The Santa Ana Valley—a long, monotonous level — was dimly visible through moving curtains of rain or veils of mist, to the black mourning edge of the horizon, and had looked like this for months. Nevertheless, on that rich alluvial soil Nature's tears seemed only to fatten the widow's acres and increase her crops. Her neighbours, too, were equally prosperous. Yet for six months of the year the recognised expression of Santa Ana was one of sadness, and for the other six months of resignation. Mrs. Wade had yielded early to this influence, as she had to others, in the weakness of her gentle nature, and partly as it was more becoming the singular tragedy that had made her a widow.

"THE WIDOW WADE WAS STANDING AT HER BEDROOM WINDOW."

The late Mr. Wade had been found dead with a bullet through his head in a secluded part of the road over Heavy Tree Hill, in Sonora County. Near him lay two other bodies, one afterwards identified as John Stubbs, a resident of the hill, and probably a travelling companion of Wade's; and the other a noted desperado and highwayman, still masked, as at the moment of the attack. Wade and his companion had probably sold their lives dearly and against odds, for another mask was found on the ground, indicating that the attack was not single-handed; and as Wade's body had not yet been rifled, it was evident that the remaining highwayman had fled in haste. The hue-and-cry had been given by apparently the only one of the travellers who escaped, but as he was hastening to take the overland coach to the East at the time, his testimony could not be submitted to the coroner's deliberation.

The facts, however, were sufficiently plain for a verdict of "wilful murder" against the highwayman, although it was believed that the absent witness had basely deserted his companion and left him to his fate, or, as it was suggested by others, that he might even have been an accomplice. It was this circumstance which protracted comment on the incident and the sufferings of the widow, far beyond that rapid obliteration which usually overtook such affairs in the feverish haste of the early days. It caused her to remove to Santa Ana, where her old father had feebly ranched "a quarter section" in the valley.

He survived her husband only a few months, leaving her the property, and once more in mourning. Perhaps this continuity of woe endeared her in a neighbourhood where distinctive ravages of diphtheria or scarlet fever gave a kind of social pre-eminence to any household, and she was so sympathetically assisted by her neighbours in the management of the ranch that, from an unkempt and wasteful wilderness, it became a paying property. The slim, willowy figure,

soft, red-lidded eyes, and deep crape of "Sister Wade" at church or prayer meeting was grateful to the soul of these gloomy worshippers, and in time she herself found that the arm of these dyspeptics of mind and body was nevertheless strong and sustaining. Small wonder that she should hesitate to-night about plunging into inconsistent, even though trifling, frivolities.

But apart from this superficial reason there was another instinctive one deep down in the recesses of Mrs. Wade's timid heart which she had secretly kept to herself, and indeed would have tearfully resented had it been offered by another. The late Mr. Wade had been, in fact, a singular example of a careless, frivolous existence carried to a man-like excess. Beside being a patron of amusements, Mr. Wade gambled, raced, and drank. He was often home late, and sometimes not at all. Not that this conduct was exceptional in the "roaring days" of Heavy Tree Hill, but it had given Mrs. Wade perhaps an undue preference for a more certain, and even a more serious, life. His tragic death was, of course, a kind of martyrdom which exalted him in the feminine mind to a saintly memory, yet Mrs. Wade was not without a certain relief in that. It was voiced, perhaps crudely, by the widow of Abner Drake in a visit of condolence to the tearful Mrs. Wade a few days after Wade's death.

"It's a vale o' sorrow, Mrs. Wade," said the sympathizer, "but it has its ups and downs, and I reckon ye'll be feelin' soon pretty much as I did about Abner when *he* was took. It was mighty soothin' and comfortin' to feel that, whatever might happen now, I always knew jist whar Abner was passin' his nights."

Poor slim Mrs. Wade had no disquieting sense of humour to interfere with her reception of this large truth, and she accepted it with a burst of reminiscent tears.

Now, gazing from the window, she was vaguely conscious of an addition to the landscape in the shape of a man who was passing down the road with a pack on his back like the tramping "prospectors" she had often seen at Heavy Tree Hill. That memory apparently settled her vacillating mind: she determined she would not go to the dance. But as she was turning away from the window a second figure—a horseman—appeared in another direction by a cross road, a shorter cut through her domain. This she had no difficulty in recognising as one of the strangers who were getting up the dance. She had noticed him at church on the previous Sunday. As he passed the house he appeared to be gazing at it so earnestly that she drew back from the window lest she should be seen. And then, for no reason whatever, she changed her mind once more, and resolved to go to the dance. Gravely announcing this fact to the wife of her superintendent, who kept house with her in her loneliness, she thought nothing more about it. She should go in her mourning, with perhaps the addition of a white collar and frill.

It was evident, however, that Santa Ana thought a good deal more than she did of this new idea, which seemed a part of the innovation already begun by the building of the new hotel. It was argued by some that, as the new church and new school-house had been opened with prayer, it was only natural that a lighter festivity should inaugurate the opening of the hotel. "I reckon that dancin' is about the next thing to travellin' for gettin' up an appetite for refreshments, and that's what the landlord is kalkilatin' to sarve," was the remark of a gloomy but practical citizen on the veranda of "The Valley Emporium."

"That's so," rejoined a bystander, "and I notice on that last box o' pills I got for chills, the directions say that a little 'agreeable exercise'—not too violent—is a great assistance to the working o' the pills."

"I reckon that that Mr. Brooks who's down here lookin' arter mill property got up the dance. He's bin round town canvassin' all the women-folks and drummin' up likely gels for it. They say he actually sent an invite to the Widder Wade," remarked another lounger. "Gosh! he's got cheek!"

"Well, gentlemen," said the proprietor, judicially, "while we don't intend to hev any minin' camp fandangos or 'Frisco falals round Santa Any" (Santa Ana was proud of its simple agricultural virtues) "I ain't so hard-shelled as not to give new things a fair trial. And after all, it's the women-folk that has the say about it. Why, there's old Miss Ford sez she hasn't kicked a foot sence she left Mizoori, but wouldn't mind trying it agin. Ez to Brooks takin' that trouble—well, I suppose it's along o' his bein' *healthy!*" He heaved a deep, dyspeptic sigh, which was faintly echoed by the others. "Why, look at him now, ridin' round on that black hoss o' his, in the wet, since daylight and not carin' for blind chills or rhumatiz!"

He was looking at a serape-draped horseman, the one the widow had seen on the previous night, who was now cantering slowly

up the street. Seeing the group on the veranda he rode up, threw himself lightly from his saddle, and joined them. He was an alert, determined, good-looking fellow of about thirty-five, whose smooth, smiling face hardly commended itself to Santa Ana, though his eyes were distinctly sympathetic. He glanced at the depressed group around him and became ominously serious.

"When did it happen?" he asked, gravely.

"What happen?" said the nearest by-stander.

"The funeral, flood, fight, or fire? Which of the four F's was it?"

"What are you talkin' about?" said the proprietor, stiffly, scenting some dangerous humour.

"*You*," said Brooks, promptly. "You're all standing here croaking like crows this fine morning. I passed *your* farm, Johnson, not an hour ago. The wheat just climbing out of the black adobe mud as thick as rows of pins on paper. What have *you* to grumble at? I saw *your* stock, Briggs, over on Two Mile Bottom, waddling along, fat as the adobe they were sticking in; their coats shining like fresh paint—what's the matter with *you?* And," turning to the proprietor, "there's *your* shed, Saunders, over on the creek, just bursting with last year's grain that you know has gone up 200 per cent. since you bought it at a bargain—what are *you* growling at? It's enough to provoke a fire or a famine to hear you groaning—and take care it don't some day, as a lesson to you."

"YOU'RE ALL STANDING HERE CROAKING LIKE CROWS."

All this was so perfectly true of the prosperous burghers that they could not for a moment reply. But Briggs had recourse to what he believed to be a retaliatory taunt: "I heard you've been askin' Widow Wade to come to your dance," he said, with a wink at the others. "Of course she said 'Yes.'"

"Of course she did," returned Brooks, coolly. "I've just got her note."

"What?" ejaculated the three men, together. "Mrs. Wade comin'?"

"Certainly! Why shouldn't she? And it would do *you* good to come too, and shake the limp dampness out of you," returned Brooks, as he quietly remounted his horse and cantered away.

"Darned ef I don't think he's got his eye on the widder," said Johnson, faintly.

"Or the quarter section," added Briggs, gloomily.

For all that the eventful evening came, with many lights in the staring, undraped windows of the hotel, coldly bright bunting on the still damp walls of the long dining-room, and a gentle downpour from the hidden skies above. A close carryall was especially selected to bring Mrs. Wade and her housekeeper. The widow arrived, looking a little slimmer than usual in her closely buttoned black dress, white collar and cuffs; very glistening in eye and in hair—whose glossy black ringlets were perhaps more elaborately arranged than was her custom—and with a faint coming and going of colour due perhaps to her agitation at this tentative re-entering into worldly life, which was nevertheless quite virginal in effect. A vague solemnity pervaded the introductory proceedings, and a singular want of sociability was visible in the "social" part of the entertainment. People talked in whispers or with that grave precision which indicates good manners in rural communities: conversed painfully with other people, whom they did not want to talk to, rather than

appear to be alone; or rushed aimlessly together like water-drops, and then floated in broken, adherent masses over the floor. The widow became a hopeless religious centre of deacons and Sunday-school teachers, which Brooks, untiring, yet fruitless, in his attempt to produce gaiety, tried in vain to break.

To this gloom the untried dangers of the impending dance, duly prefigured by a lonely cottage piano and two violins in a desert of expanse, added a nervous chill. When at last the music struck up, somewhat hesitatingly and protestingly, from the circumstance that the player was the church organist, and fumbled mechanically for his stops, the attempt to make up a cotillon set was left to the heroic Brooks. Yet he barely escaped disaster when, in posing the couples, he incautiously begged them to look a little less as if they were waiting for the coffin to be borne down the aisle between them. Yet the cotillon passed off; a Spanish dance succeeded; "Money Musk," with the Virginia Reel, put a slight intoxicating vibration into the air, and healthy youth at last asserted itself in a score of freckled, but buxom, girls in white muslin, with romping figures and laughter at the lower end of the room. Still, a rigid decorum reigned among the older dancers, and the figures were called out in grave formality, as if, to Brooks's fancy, they were hymns given from the pulpit, until at the close of the set, in half-real, half-mock despair, he turned deliberately to Mrs. Wade, his partner: "Do you waltz?"

Mrs. Wade hesitated. She *had* before marriage, and was a good waltzer.

"I do," she said, timidly; "but do you think they——"

"A VAGUE SOLEMNITY PERVADED THE INTRODUCTORY PROCEEDINGS."

But before the poor widow could formulate her fears as to the reception of "round dances," Brooks had darted to the piano, and the next moment she heard, with a "fearful joy," the opening bars of a waltz. It was an old Julien waltz, fresh still in the fifties, daring, provocative to foot, swamping to intellect, arresting to judgment, irresistible, supreme! Before Mrs. Wade could protest, Brooks's arm had gathered up her slim figure, and with one quick, backward sweep and swirl they were off! The floor was cleared for them in a sudden bewilderment of alarm—a suspense of burning curiosity. The widow's little feet tripped quickly; her long black skirt swung out; as she turned the corner there was not only a sudden revelation of her pretty ankles, but, what was more startling, a dazzling flash of frilled and laced petticoat, which at once convinced every woman in the room that the act had been premeditated for days! Yet even that criticism was presently forgotten in the pervading intoxication of the music and the movement. The younger people fell into it with wild rompings, whirlings, and claspings of hands and waists. And, stranger than all, a corybantic enthusiasm seized upon the emotionally religious, and those priests and priestesses of Cybele, who were famous for their frenzy and passion in camp-meeting devotions, seemed to find an equal expression that night in the waltz. And when, flushed and panting, Mrs. Wade at last halted on the arm of her partner, they were nearly knocked over by the revolving Johnson and Mrs. Stubbs, in a whirl of gloomy exaltation! Deacons and Sunday-school teachers waltzed together until the long room shook, and the very bunting on the walls

waved and fluttered with the gyrations of these religious Dervishes. Nobody knew—nobody cared—how long this frenzy lasted; it ceased only with the collapse of the musicians. Then, with much vague bewilder-

"THEY WERE NEARLY KNOCKED OVER."

ment, inward trepidation, awkward and incoherent partings, everybody went dazedly home. There was no other dancing after that—the waltz was the one event of the festival and of the history of Santa Ana. And later that night, when the timid Mrs. Wade, in the seclusion of her own room and the disrobing of her slim figure, glanced at her spotless frilled and laced petticoat lying on a chair, a faint smile—the first of her widowhood—curved the corners of her pretty mouth.

A week of ominous silence regarding the festival succeeded in Santa Ana. The local paper gave the fullest particulars of the opening of the hotel, but contented itself with saying: "The entertaiment concluded with a dance." Mr. Brooks, who felt himself compelled to call upon his late charming partner, twice during the week, characteristically soothed her anxieties as to the result.

"The fact of it is, Mrs. Wade, there's really nobody in particular to blame—and that's what gets them! They're all mixed up in it, deacons and Sunday-school teachers; and when old Johnson tried to be nasty the other evening and hoped you hadn't suffered from your exertions that night, I told him you hadn't quite recovered yet from the physical shock of having been run into by him and Mrs. Stubbs, but that, your being a lady, you didn't tell just how you felt at the exhibition he and she made of themselves. That shut him up."

"But you shouldn't have said that," said Mrs. Wade, with a frightened little smile.

"No matter," returned Brooks, cheerfully; "I'll take the blame of it with the others. You see, they'll have to have a scape-goat—and I'm just the man—for I got up the dance! And as I'm going away, I suppose I shall bear off the sin with me in the wilderness."

"You're going away?" repeated Mrs. Wade, in more genuine concern.

"Not for long," returned Brooks, laughingly. "I came here to look up a mill site, and I've found it. Meantime, I think I've opened their eyes."

"You have opened mine," said the widow, with timid frankness.

They were soft, pretty eyes when opened, in spite of their heavy, red lids, and Mr. Brooks thought that Santa Ana would be no worse if they remained open. Possibly he looked it, for Mrs. Wade said, hurriedly, "I mean—that is—I've been thinking that life needn't *always* be so gloomy as we make it here. And even *here*, you know, Mr. Brooks, we have six months' sunshine—though we always forget it in the rainy season."

"That's so," said Brooks, cheerfully. "I once lost a heap of money through my own foolishness, and I've managed to forget it, and I even reckon to get it back again out of

Santa Ana if my mill speculation holds good. So good-bye, Mrs. Wade—but not for long." He shook her hand frankly and departed, leaving the widow conscious of a certain sympathetic confidence and a little grateful for—she knew not what.

This feeling remained with her most of the afternoon, and even imparted a certain gaiety to her spirits, to the extent of causing her to hum softly to herself, the air being, oddly enough, the Julien waltz. And when, later in the day, the shadows were closing in with the rain, word was brought to her that a stranger wished to see her in the sitting-room, she carried a less mournful mind to this function of her existence. For Mrs. Wade was accustomed to give audience to travelling agents, tradesmen, working hands, and servants as chatelaine of her ranch, and the occasion was not novel. Yet, on entering the room which she used partly as an office, she found some difficulty in classifying the stranger, who at the first glance reminded her of the tramping miner she had seen that night from her window. He was rather incongruously dressed, some articles of his apparel being finer than others: he wore a diamond pin in a scarf folded over a rough "hickory" shirt; his light trousers were tucked in common mining boots that bore stains of travel and a suggestion that he had slept in his clothes. What she could see of his unshaven face in that uncertain light expressed a kind of dogged concentration, overlaid by an assumption of ease. He got up as she came in, and with a slight, "How do, ma'am?" shut the door behind her and glanced furtively around the room.

"What I've got to say to ye, Mrs. Wade—as I reckon you be—is strictly private and confidential! Why, ye'll see afore I get through. But I thought I might just as well caution ye ag'in our being disturbed."

Overcoming a slight instinct of repulsion, Mrs. Wade returned: "You can speak to me here; no one will interrupt you—unless I call them," she added, with a little feminine caution.

"And I reckon ye won't do that," he said, with a grim smile. "You are the widow o' Pulaski Wade, late o' Heavy Tree Hill, I reckon?"

"I am," said Mrs. Wade.

"And your husband's berried up thar in the graveyard with a monument over him, setting forth his virtues ez a Christian and a square man, and a high-minded citizen? And that he was foully murdered by highwaymen?".

"Yes," said Mrs. Wade, "that is the inscription."

"Well, ma'am—a bigger pack o' lies never was cut on stone!"

Mrs. Wade arose, half in indignation, half in vague terror.

"Keep your sittin'," said the stranger, with a warning wave of his hand. "Wait till I'm through, and then you call in the hull State o' Californy—*ef* ye want."

The stranger's manner was so doggedly confident that Mrs. Wade sank back, tremblingly, in her chair. The man put his slouch hat on his knee, twirled it round once or twice, and then said, with the same stubborn deliberation: "The highwayman in that business was *your husband*—Pulaski Wade and his gang, and he was killed by one o' the men he was robbin'. Ye see, ma'am, it used to be your husband's little game to rope in three or four strangers in a poker deal at Spanish Jim's saloon. . . . . I see you've heard o' the place," he interpolated, as Mrs. Wade drew back suddenly; "and when he couldn't clean 'em out in that way, or they showed a little more money than they played, he'd lay for 'em with his gang in a lone part of the trail, and go through them like any road agent. That's what he did that night, and that's how he got killed."

"How do you know this?" said Mrs. Wade, with quivering lips.

"I was one o' the men he went through before he was killed. And I'd hev got my money back, but the rest o' the gang came up, and I got away jest in time to save my life and nothin' else. Ye might remember thar was one man got away and giv' the alarm, but he was goin' on to the States by the overland coach that night, and couldn't stay to be a witness. *I* was that man. I had paid my passage through, and I couldn't lose *that* too with my other money, so I went."

Mrs. Wade sat, stunned. She remembered the missing witness, and how she had longed to see the man who was last with her husband. She remembered Spanish Jim's saloon—his well-known haunt; his frequent and unaccountable absences; the sudden influx of money which he always said he had won at cards; the diamond ring he had given her as the result of "a bet"; the forgotten recurrences of other robberies by a secret masked gang; a hundred other things that had worried her, instinctively, vaguely. She knew now, too, the meaning of the unrest that had driven her from Heavy Tree

Hill—the strange, unformulated fears that had haunted her even here. Yet with all this she felt, too, her present weakness; knew that this man had taken her at a disadvantage, that she ought to indignantly assert herself, deny everything, demand proof, and brand him a slanderer!

"How did—you—know it was my husband?" she stammered.

"His mask fell off in the fight; you know another mask was found; it was his. I saw him as plain as I see him there!" He pointed to a daguerreotype of her husband which stood upon her desk.

"MRS. WADE SAT, STUNNED."

Mrs. Wade could only stare, vacantly, hopelessly. After a pause the man continued, in a less aggressive manner and more confidential tone, which, however, only increased her terror: "I ain't sayin' that *you* knowed anything about this, ma'am, and whatever other folks might say when they know of it, I'll allers say that you didn't."

"What then do you come here for?" said the widow, desperately.

"What do I come here for?" repeated the man, grimly, looking around the room. "What did I come to this yer comfortable home—this yer big ranch and a rich woman like yourself for? Well, Mrs. Wade, I come to get the six hundred dollars your husband robbed me of, that's all. I ain't askin' more. I ain't askin' interest. I ain't askin' compensation for havin' to run for my life and——" again looking grimly round the walls—"I ain't askin' more than you will give—or is my rights."

"But this house never was his—it is my father's," gasped Mrs. Wade. "You have no right——"

"Mebbe 'yes' and mebbe 'no,' Mrs. Wade," interrupted the man, with a wave of his hat; "but how about them two drafts to bearer for two hundred dollars each, found among your husband's effects, and collected by your lawyer for you—*my drafts*, Mrs. Wade?"

A wave of dreadful recollection overwhelmed her. She remembered the drafts found upon her husband's body, known only to her and her lawyer, and believed to be gambling gains, and collected at once under his legal advice. Yet she made one more desperate effort in spite of the instinct that told her he was speaking the truth.

"But you shall have to prove it—before witnesses."

"Do you *want* me to prove it before witnesses?" said the man, coming nearer her. "Do you want to take my word and keep it between ourselves, or do you want to call in your superintendent and his men—and all Santa Ana to hear me prove your husband was a highwayman, thief, and murderer? Do you want to knock over that monument on Heavy Tree Hill, and upset your standing here among the deacons and elders? Do you want to do all this, and be forced, even by your neighbours, to pay me in the end, as you will? Ef you do, call in your witnesses now, and let's have it over. Mebbe it would look better ef I got the money out of *your friends* than ye—a woman! P'r'aps you're right!"

He made a step towards the door, but she stopped him.

"No! No! Wait! It's a large sum; I haven't it with me," she stammered, thoroughly beaten.

"Ye kin get it."

"Give me time," she implored. "Look! I'll give you a hundred down now—all I have here—the rest another time." She nervously opened a drawer of her desk, and taking out

a buckskin bag of gold thrust it in his hand. "There! Go away now." She lifted her thin hand despairingly to her head. "Go! Do!"

The man seemed struck by her manner. "I don't want to be hard on a woman," he said, slowly. "I'll go now, and come back again at nine to-night. You can git the money; or, what's as good, a cheque to bearer, by then. And ef ye'll take my advice you won't ask no advice from others, ef you want to keep your secret. Jest now it's safe with me; I'm a square man—ef I seem to be a hard one." He made a gesture as if to take her hand, but as she drew shrinkingly away he changed it to an awkward bow, and the next moment was gone.

She started to her feet, but the unwonted strain upon her nerves and frail body had been greater than she knew. She made a step forward, felt the room whirl round her, and then seem to collapse beneath her feet, and, clutching at her chair, sank back into it, fainting.

How long she lay there she never knew. She was at last conscious of someone bending over her, and a voice—the voice of Mr. Brooks—in her ear, saying, "I beg your pardon—you seem ill. Shall I call someone?"

"No!" she gasped, quickly recovering herself with an effort and staring around her. "Where is—when did you come in?"

"Only this moment. I was leaving to-night, sooner than I expected, and thought I'd say good-bye. They told me that you had been engaged with a stranger, but he had just gone. I beg your pardon—I see you are ill. I won't detain you any longer."

"No! No! Don't go! I am better—better," she said, feverishly. As she glanced at his strong and sympathetic face a wild idea seized her. He was a stranger here, an alien to these people, like herself! The advice that she dare not seek from others, from her half-estranged religious friends, from even her superintendent and his wife—dare she ask from him?

Perhaps he saw this frightened doubt, this imploring appeal, in her eyes, for he said, gently, "Is it anything I can do for you?"

"Yes," she said, with the sudden desperation of weakness, "I want you to keep a secret!"

"Yours; yes!" he said, promptly.

Whereat poor Mrs. Wade instantly burst into tears. Then amidst her sobs she told him of the stranger's visit, of his terrible accusations, of his demands; his expected return, and her own utter helplessness. To her terror, as she went on she saw a singular change in his kind face: he was following her with hard, eager intensity. She had half hoped, even through her fateful instincts, that he might have laughed man-like at her fears, or pooh-poohed the whole thing. But he did not.

"You say he positively recognised your husband?" he repeated, quickly.

"Yes! yes!" sobbed the widow; "and knew that photograph!" she pointed to the desk. Brooks turned quickly in that direction. Luckily his back was towards her, and she could not see his face nor the quick, startled look that came into his eyes. But when they again met hers it was gone, and even their eager intensity had changed to a gentle commiseration.

"You have only his word for it, Mrs. Wade," he said, gently; "and in telling your secret to another, you have shorn the rascal of half his power over you. And he knew it. Now, dismiss the matter from your mind and leave it all to me. I will be here a few minutes before nine—*and alone in this room.* Let your visitor be shown in here—and don't let us be disturbed. Don't be alarmed," he added, with a faint twinkle in his eye, "there will be no fuss and no exposure!"

It lacked a few minutes of nine when Mr. Brooks was ushered into the sitting-room. As soon as he was alone he quietly examined the door and the windows, and, having satisfied himself, took his seat in a chair casually placed behind the door. Presently he heard the sound of voices and a heavy footstep in the passage. He lightly felt his waistcoat-pocket—it contained a pretty little weapon of power and precision, with a barrel scarcely two inches long.

The door opened, and the person outside entered the room. In an instant Brooks had shut the door and locked it behind him. The man turned fiercely, but was faced by Brooks quietly, with one finger carelessly hooked in his waistcoat-pocket. The man slightly recoiled from him, not so much from fear as from some vague stupefaction. "What's that for? What's your little game?" he said, half contemptuously.

"No game at all," returned Brooks, coolly. "You came here to sell a secret. I don't propose to have it *given* away first to any listener."

"*You* don't!—who are *you?*"

"That's a queer question to ask of the man you are trying to personate; but I don't wonder! You're doing it d—d badly."

Personate—*you?*" said the stranger, with staring eyes.

"Yes, *me*," said Brooks, quietly. "I am the only man who escaped from the robbery that night at Heavy Tree Hill, and who went home by the overland coach."

The stranger stared, but recovered himself, with a coarse laugh. "Oh, well! we're on the same lay, it appears! Both after the widow—afore we show up her husband."

"Not exactly," said Brooks, with his eyes fixed intently on the stranger. "You are here to denounce a highwayman who is *dead*, and escaped justice. I am here to denounce one who is *living!* Stop! drop your hand; it's no use; you thought you had to deal only with a woman to-night, and your revolver isn't quite handy enough. There! down! down! So! That'll do."

"You can't prove it," said the man, hoarsely.

"Fool! In your story to that woman you have given yourself away. There were but two travellers attacked by the highwaymen. One was killed—I am the other. Where do *you* come in? What witness can you be, except as the highwayman, that you were? Who is left to identify Wade but his accomplice?"

The man's suddenly whitened face made his unshaven beard seem to bristle over his face like some wild animal's. "Well, ef you kalkilate to blow me, you've got to blow Wade and his widder too. Jest you remember that," he said, whiningly.

"I've thought of that," said Brooks, coolly, "and I calculate that to prevent it is worth about that $100 you got from that poor woman—and no more. Now sit down at that table, and write as I dictate."

The man looked at him in wonder, but obeyed.

"THE MAN LOOKED UP WITH A REPULSIVE SMILE."

"Write," said Brooks: "I hereby certify that my accusations against the late Pulaski Wade of Heavy Tree Hill are erroneous and groundless, and the result of mistaken identity, especially in regard to any complicity of his, in the robbery of John Stubbs, deceased, and Henry Brooks, at Heavy Tree Hill, on the night of the 13th August, 1854.'"

The man looked up with a repulsive smile. "Who's the fool now, Cap'n? What's become of your hold on the widder, now?"

"Write!" said Brooks, fiercely.

The sound of a pen hurriedly scratching paper followed this first outburst of the quiet Brooks.

"Sign it," said Brooks.

The man signed it.

"Now go," said Brooks, unlocking the door, "but remember if you should ever be inclined to revisit Santa Ana you will find *me* living here also."

The man slunk out of the door and into the passage like a wild animal returning to the night and darkness. Brooks took up the paper, rejoined Mrs. Wade in the parlour, and laid it before her.

"But," said the widow, trembling in her joy, "do you—do you think he was *really* mistaken?"

"Positive," said Brooks, coolly. "It's true it's a mistake that has cost you a hundred dollars—but there are some mistakes that are worth that to be kept quiet."

They were married a year later, but there is no record that in after years of conjugal relations with a weak, charming, but sometimes trying woman, Henry Brooks was ever tempted to tell her the whole truth of the robbery of Heavy Tree Hill.

The Queen in "Punch": 1841–1899.

By J. Holt Schooling.

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WHEN cartoon No. 1 was published in Mr. Punch's first volume, September 12, 1841, the Queen was in her twenty-third year; Sir Robert Peel was Prime Minister, and he is here shown in the guise of a wolf approaching the Queen, who is Little Red Riding Hood, from whose basket hangs a

1.—The Royal Red Riding Hood and the Ministerial Wolf. 1841.

tempting list — Place, Patronage, Power, Perquisites, Pensions. But the Queen looks askance at the Premier, who was treated rather severely by Mr. Punch in this and in other cartoons.

In No. 2 the Chinese Ambassador is being presented to the Queen after the

2.—The Presentation of the Chinese Ambassador. By Leech, 1842.

3.—Calypso Mourning the Departure of Ulysses. 1844.

termination of our war with China: the treaty of peace had been signed on board the *Cornwallis*, off Nankin, on August 29, 1842, and this treaty was ratified by Queen Victoria in July, 1843.

In 1844 King Louis Philippe visited England, the Queen having visited the Royal family of France at Château d'Eu in September, 1843. The two Sovereigns were on friendly terms, and in No. 3 Mr. Punch represents the Queen as Calypso mourning the departure of Ulysses from her island; he is sailing away in his ship. King Louis

4.—The Demon of Discord, vanishing at the appearance in Ireland of The Good Genius, Victoria. 1845.

5.—"There's No Place Like Home!" or, the return to Buckingham Palace. By Leech, 1845.

8.—Political Economy; or, Lord John in Peel's Clothes. The Queen *(loq.)*. "Well! It is not the best fit in the world, but we'll see how he goes on!" By Leech, 1846.

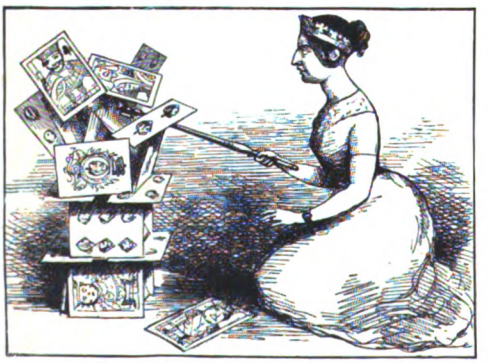
Philippe abdicated February 24, 1848, and he died in exile, in England, in 1850.

Cartoon No. 4 represents Daniel O'Connell, the Irish agitator, as a Demon of Discord who vanishes to a warm place before the effulgence of the young Queen, then in her twenty-sixth year. The Duke of Wellington dances for joy. In 1844 O'Connell had been tried for political conspiracy and found guilty. This visit of the Queen to Ireland was, I believe, postponed to the year 1849.

In August, 1845, the Queen visited Germany, and in No. 5 the Queen and the Prince Consort return to their home and children, who in this picture are the Princess Victoria (now the mother of the Emperor of Germany), the Prince of Wales, the Princess Alice, and the Duke of Edinburgh.

Lord John Russell became Prime Minister in July, 1846, after the resignation of Sir Robert Peel upon a matter of corn laws, and in No. 6 the Queen says to Russell, "I'm afraid

6.—"I'm afraid you're not strong enough for the place, John." By Leech, 1846.



7.—The Queen Dissolving Parliament. 1847.

9.—Queen Canute Reproving Her Courtiers. By Richard Doyle, 1848.

you're not strong enough for the place, John." The old "page-boy," Peel, is going out with a wry face, and Prince Albert stands at the back of the Queen's chair.

In No. 7 the Queen knocks down the house of cards with her sceptre, and in No. 8 the Queen and the Prince Consort regard Lord John Russell, in Sir Robert Peel's clothes, with some doubt as to the fitness of the new Premier for his place.

10.—A Morning Call. *Hibernia.* "Sure, Sisther dear, It's not what you've been accustomed to exactly, but anyhow you're welcome." By Leech, 1849.

Queen Canute, in No. 9, reproves her courtiers, Lord John Russell, the Duke of Wellington, and others, as the waves of Reform and Progress lap her feet, refusing to be kept back.

11.—Her Majesty, as She Appeared on the First of May, Surrounded by "Horrible Conspirators and Assassins." 1851.

12.—The Opening of Parliament Pie. By Richard Doyle, 1850.

The Queen's first visit to Ireland, in August, 1849, is referred to in No. 10. The next cartoon, No. 11, shows the Queen at the opening of the Great Exhibition of 1851; No. 12 is the opening of the Parliamentary Pie by Mr. Punch, whereat the Queen gazes with some dismay. In No. 13 Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, the Queen's servants, stand before their Mistress to be chided. Lord Palmerston was Minister of Foreign Affairs, Russell was Premier; the two disagreed, and the Queen removed Palmerston from office.

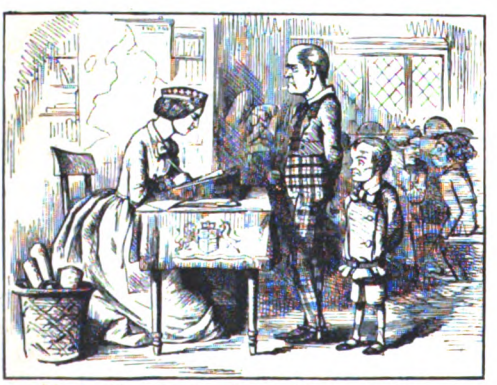
13.—There's Always Something. "I'm very sorry, Palmerston, that you cannot agree with your Fellow Servants; but as I don't feel inclined to part with John, you must go, of course." By John Leech, 1852.

In cartoon No. 14 the Queen does not seem greatly impressed by the show of birds —the French eagle, the Prussian eagle, the Russian, the Austrian, the American eagle. The Queen suggests to Mr. Punch that she could send a Lion to the show. And Mr. Punch, delightful old gentleman, looks as

14.—International Poultry Show. "We have nothing of that sort, *Mr. Punch*, but if there should be a Lion show, we can send a specimen." 1853.

pleased as Punch to hear his gracious Queen's words—he looks rather knowing, too.

15.—Throwing The Old Shoe. At the Parting of Her Majesty and her Guards. By Leech, 1854.



16.—The Holiday Letter. *Royal Mistress (writes).* "In the case of Masters Aberdeen and Russell, I regret to say that the most extreme idleness has characterised the whole half-year." 1854.

On February 27, 1854, the ultimatum of England and France was sent to St. Petersburg; the Czar "did not judge it suitable to give an answer," and so we were in the Crimean War—Cartoon No. 15 shows the Queen with her children throwing the old slipper of good luck to her Guards who are marching to the war.

In No. 16 the Queen as a school-mistress is

17.—The Queen Visiting the Imbeciles of the Crimea. By John Leech, 1855.

writing a very unfavourable report of the two boys, Lord John Russell and Lord Aberdeen; the latter was Prime Minister in 1854, and Russell was Foreign Secretary. In the

18.—La Belle Alliance, 1855.

background of this picture is Disraeli talking gleefully to another "boy" about the disgrace of Russell and Aberdeen. At this time the Queen was in her thirty-sixth year.

Cartoon No 17 was published April 14, 1855, after we had had ample time to discover the gross blundering and mis-

management which caused so much unnecessary suffering and hardship to our troops in the Crimea. The Queen looks very gravely at the dummies labelled Medical Department, Routine, Green Coffee, Commissariat.

In April, 1855, the Emperor Napoleon III. and the Empress of France visited England, and in August of that year the Queen and the Prince Consort returned the visit. Cartoon No. 18 shows the Queen stroking the head of the French eagle, the Empress of France caresses the British lion, while Napo-

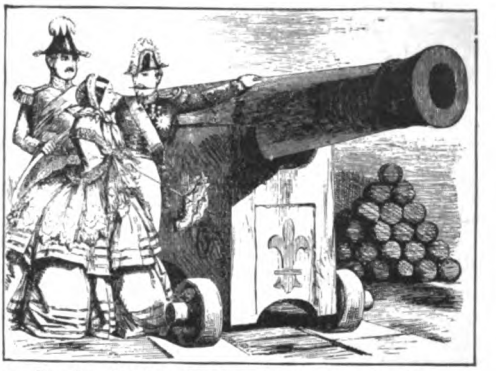
19.—The Return of the "Resolute."—A Graceful Gift from Brother Jonathan. 1856.

leon III. takes a light from Prince Albert's cigar.

In cartoon No. 19 James Buchanan, President of the United States, is presenting the Queen with the three-masted ship *Resolute*. The *Resolute* was one of the many British ships that went to search for Sir John Franklin, who never returned from his voyage of discovering the North-West Passage. The *Resolute* had to be abandoned; she was found by an American ship, bought by order of Congress, thoroughly repaired and equipped, and then sent to the Queen as a present from the United States.

20.—"O God of Battles! Steel my Soldiers' Hearts!" 1857.

News of the horrors of the Indian Mutiny had reached England when, in No. 20, the Queen prays for help as she kneels surrounded by widows and orphans. In August, 1858, the Queen visited Cherbourg, and cartoon No. 21 refers to this visit, ascribing to the Queen a pithy rejoinder to Napoleon the Third's remark about his big gun.



21.—The Royal Visit to Cherbourg Anticipated. The Emperor. "A fine gun, your Majesty." The Queen. "Yes! Exactly like a number we have at Woolwich." 1858.

As a result of the Indian Mutiny, the government of India by the East India Company ceased on September 1, 1858, and cartoon No. 22 shows the Queen for the first time as Queen of India. In this comely portrait the Queen wears the very pleasing and queenly "Gothic" crown which

22.—The Accession of the Queen of India. 1858.

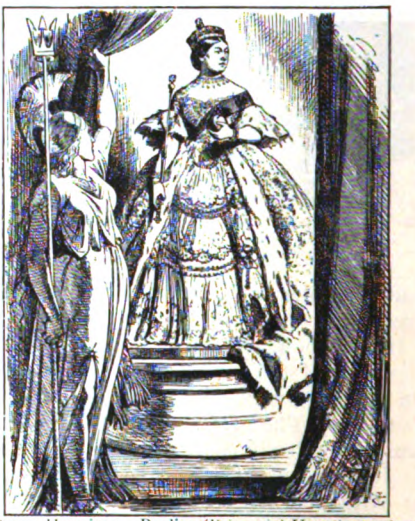
is still better seen in cartoon No. 23. This Gothic crown is finely shown on the old florins.

The Earl of Derby, who became Prime Minister in 1858, was driven from power in June, 1859, by a coalition of his opponents, and as a consolation the Queen bestowed upon the defeated Minister the Order of the Garter —see No. 23.

The first meeting of the National Association for Rifle-Shooting was held at Wimbledon in July, 1860; and in cartoon No. 24 Mr. Punch gallantly stands upon some of his own volumes and offers his head as the best rest for the Queen's rifle—the Queen inaugurated the meeting by firing the first shot. At this date Her Majesty was in her forty-second year.

23.—Balm for the Wounded. H-r M-j-sty. "Poor little man. Did he have a nasty tumble? Here's something to make him all right again!" By John Leech, 1859.

24.—Best Rest For The Queen's Rifle. 1860.



26.—Queen Hermione. Paulina (Britannia) Unveils the Statue. "'Tis time! Descend; be stone no more!" [Winters' Tale, Act V., Scene 3.] By Tenniel, 1865.

25.—"Doth Not a Meeting Like This Make Amends?" H-r M-j—y the Q—n. "My dear Ireland, how much better you look since my last visit. I am *so* glad!" 1861.

The Queen's third visit to Ireland is depicted in No. 25: her second visit was in 1853. This third visit took place in August, 1861; and on December 14, 1861, the Prince Consort died, the Queen being in her forty-third year.

A few years pass without portraits of the Queen; and then in No. 26—a noble picture—Britannia draws aside the curtain and discloses our majestic Queen. This was published September 23, 1865, when the Queen was in her forty-seventh year. In No. 27 Lord John Russell, again Prime Minister, upon the death of Lord Palmerston in October, 1865, is introducing to the Queen Lord Clarendon, who, in 1865, took the office of Foreign Secretary then vacated by Russell, promoted.

The question

asked by Mr. Punch in No. 28 refers to the very serious Fenian outrages of 1867–68. Special constables were called for, and by January 28, 1868, no fewer than 113,674 were sworn in, in the United Kingdom. These are shown in the cartoon, with the Queen reviewing them.

27.—The New Foreign Secretary. Johnny Russell. "I can confidently recommend this young man, Clarendon, your Majesty, and I taught him writing myself!" The Queen. "Indeed, John; then I hope he'll mind his P's and Q's better than you did." By Tenniel, 1865.

Queen Elizabeth's characteristic Tudor ejaculations in No. 29 refer to the fact that there was much opposition and wrangling in Parliament about the Irish Church Bill. The paper that Queen Victoria reads is headed "Irish Church Bill. Amendments, Lords and Commons." The Royal Assent to the Bill was given July 26, 1869.

Cartoon No. 30 refers to the return, in

28.—"Who's Afraid?" Mr. Punch. "On behalf of myself and the rest of the nation, may I ask—Is Your Majesty afraid?" The Queen. "Afraid! O dear no, Mr. Punch! Are you?" By Tenniel, 1868.

29.—A Change for the Better. Ghost of Queen Elizabeth. "Agreed have they? Ods boddikins! Gads my life, and marry come up, Sweetheart! In *my* time I'd have knocked all their addlepates together till they *had* agreed!" By Tenniel, 1869.

March, 1874, of Sir Garnet Wolseley and his troops from the successful expedition in Ashantee. The Queen reviewed these troops in Windsor Great Park, hence Mr. Punch's remark: "The Levée of the Season."

No. 31 refers to the national thanksgiving on February 27, 1872, for the recovery of the Prince of Wales from his nearly fatal attack of typhoid fever. The Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Court, and Parliament went in State to St. Paul's

30.—*The* Levée of the Season. By Tenniel, 1874.

Cathedral and therein gave thanks. The Queen kneels behind the Prince.

Mr. Punch was very apt with his cartoon No. 32: "Her Best Title—'Queen of the East.'" A new wing of the London Hospital in East London was opened by the Queen in person on March 7, 1876, and at this

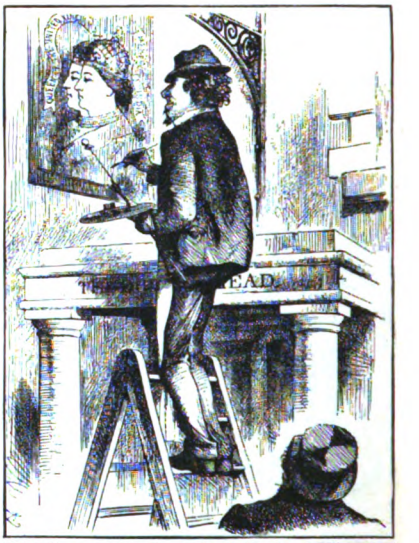
31.—"Thanksgiving." February 27, 1872. By Tenniel.

time also there were discussions as to the proposed alteration of the Royal Title in respect to India. Mr. Punch's happy title applies to poor East London and to rich East India.

The four cartoons, Nos. 33 to 36, all refer

32.—"Her Best Title—'Queen of the East.'" By Tenniel, 1876.

to the alteration in the Royal Title to Empress of India, brought about by Disraeli. He is at work on the two heads, of Queen and Empress, in No. 33; and in No. 34 the Queen, who wears the Empress's Crown of India, is placing an earl's coronet on Disraeli's head. In No. 35 the Queen is proclaimed as Empress of India at Delhi, by the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, on January 1, 1877. And in No. 36 the Empress of India fends off King Famine from her domain. This was published September 1,



33.—"The Queen with Two Heads." Mr. Bull. "No, no, Benjamin, it will never do! You can't improve on the old '*Queen's Head!*'" By Tenniel, 1876.

1877, and at that date the prospects in India were much improved owing to copious rain and to the strenuous efforts made in this country to relieve the distress in India. With the Queen's sanction, Parliament had authorized the Secretary for India to raise a

34.—Empress and Earl; or, One Good Turn Deserves Another. Lord Beaconsfield. "Thanks, your Majesty! I might have had it before! *Now* I think I have *earned* it!" By Tenniel, 1876.

loan for £5,000,000, and there was also a big Mansion House fund.

Early in October, 1879, Mr. Parnell made some exciting speeches at Navan, on the Anti-Rent. Coercion, lines. It was, as Mr. Punch says in cartoon No. 37, a bad lead. Mr. Parnell played the Knave of Spades instead of the Queen of Hearts!

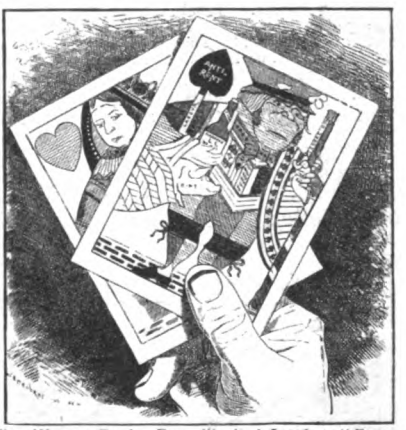
In No. 38, "Those who are about to Die" salute the

35.—Kaiser-i-Hind. (Queen proclaimed Empress of India at Delhi, January 1, 1877.) By Linley Sambourne, 1877.

Bright, and other leaders face the Queen with the salute of dying men.

In No. 39 the Queen looks with not too much warmth of approval at Mr. Gladstone's new Cabinet, where the heads of the Ministers are inserted as panels, and Her Majesty hopes that "the new wood will stand well." The chief piece of "new wood" was Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, whose head is in the panel second from

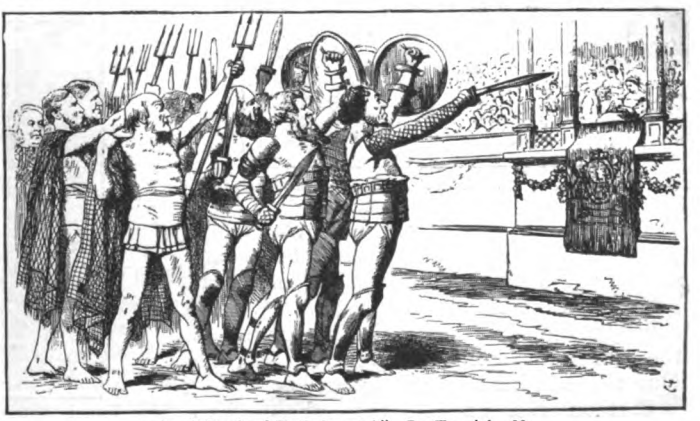
36.—"Disputed Empire!" By Tenniel, 1877.



37.—The Wrong Card. Parnell's bad Lead at "Beggar my Neighbour." By Linley Sambourne, 1879.

the floor, he being made a Cabinet Minister for the first time in the Gladstone Adminis-

Queen, after the fashion of the gladiators in a Roman arena. This cartoon was published February 7, 1880, and the ninth Parliament of the Queen's reign was dissolved on February 23rd, its last Session having been opened by the Queen on February 5th. Lord Beaconsfield, Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord Salisbury, Mr. Gladstone, the Marquis of Hartington, Sir William Harcourt, John



38.—"Morituri Te Salutant!" By Tenniel, 1880.

39.—Cabinet-Making. Head Carpenter. "I hope your Majesty likes the new cabinet. It's been hard work—such a quantity of material!" The Queen. "I see most of it is well seasoned—let us hope the new wood will stand well!" By Tenniel, 1880.

tration of 1880—1885, as President of the Board of Trade. No. 40 refers to a review of Scots troops by the Queen.

On March 10, 1882, the Queen was shot at by Roderick Maclean at the Great Western

40.—The Gathering of the Clans. By Linley Sambourne, 1881.

Railway Station, Windsor, and in No. 41 Mr. Punch offers to the Queen a letter conveying to Her Majesty an expression of loyal sympathy from her loving people. What a courtly old gentleman Mr. Punch looks! At the date of this cartoon, March 18, 1882, the Queen was in her sixty-third year.

Cartoon No. 42 refers to the Indian contingent who distinguished themselves in the Egyptian War, and to the decoration of some members of the contingent by the Queen with the Order of British India. This honour was most highly gratifying to the Indian soldiers who received it. No. 43 refers to the Fifty Years' Jubilee of 1887.

41.—"God Save the Queen!" By Tenniel, 1882.

In August, 1889, the Emperor William of Germany visited the Queen, and in No. 44 Mr. Punch refers to the Naval Review at Spithead, where the fleet was inspected by the Emperor. At the date of this cartoon the Queen was in her seventy-first year.

The Queen's first visit to Wales took place in August, 1889, and in No. 45 the Irish

42.—Victoria Regina et Imperatrix. *Shade of Lord Beaconsfield.* "Now—you remember *Me!*" By Linley Sambourne, 1882.

43.—"God Save the Queen!" By Tenniel, June 25, 1887.

Mr. Punch's first number for 1897 contained cartoon No. 47, where, with Mr. Punch as sponsor, the little New Year 1897 is ennobled by receiving the accolade at the Queen's hand, and by being entitled "Queen's Year."

The representation of Great Queens of History in No. 48 was published in Mr. Punch's Jubilee Number, June 19, 1897. On the right of Victoria is Queen Elizabeth, and on

Colleen steps in between Her Majesty and the Welsh woman with the request, "Shure won't ye come an' see *Me?*" The Queen's last visit to Ireland had been in 1861, and her recent visit has shown very clearly that the Queen of Hearts is the right card for

45.—"Come Back To Erin!" The Colleen. "If ye plaise, yure Majesty, as ye've seen me sisthers at home, shure won't ye come an' see *me?*—Ye'll be very welcome!!" By Tenniel, 1889.

44.—Visiting Grandmamma. Grandma' Victoria. "Now, Willie dear, you've plenty of *soldiers* at home; look at these pretty *ships*—I'm sure you'll be pleased with *them!*" By Tenniel, 1889.

Ireland, not Mr. Parnell's ugly Knave of Spades (see No. 37).

On September 23, 1896, the Queen was at Balmoral, and she there received congratulations on having reigned longer than any British Sovereign. At that time also the Emperor and Empress of Russia paid a visit to the Queen, and although the visit was a private one, its concurrence with a most critical moment in European politics gave international importance to this visit by the Czar, to whom in No. 46 Her Majesty is saying "Adieu! Dear Kinsman! If we but act together, all will be well."

46.—"Blessed Are the Peacemakers." Her Gracious Majesty. "Adieu! Dear Kinsman! If we but act together, all will be well." By Tenniel, 1896.

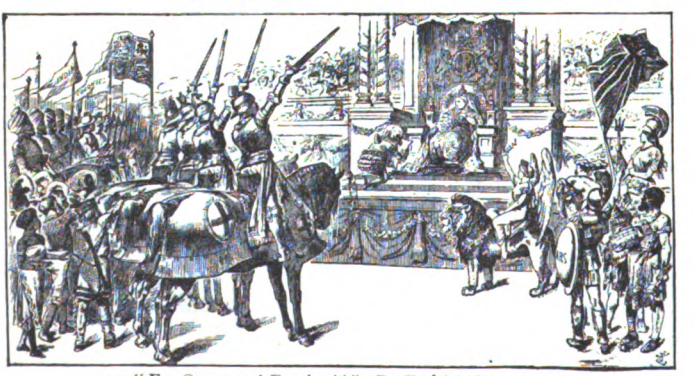
the left is Catherine of Russia; Mary Tudor stands behind her sister Elizabeth, and just above Mary Zenobia of Palmyra; then comes Queen Dido, and at the back of Dido stands dark Cleopatra with arm uplifted. Queen Philippa, wife of Edward III., is shown at the extreme right, wearing the tall, conical head-dress of a Plantagenet lady. Just below Elizabeth is Queen Anne, and below Anne is the British Boadicea.

47.—The Queen's Year! By Tenniel, January 2, 1897.

On the other side, at the left of Queen Victoria, Semiramis of Assyria matches Cleopatra, the Queen of Sheba is stretching her right hand towards Victoria; and then come Queens Josephine, wife of Napoleon I., Marie Antoinette, Catherine of Russia, Maria Theresa of Austria, and Isabella of Spain. And in the midst of all these Queens sits Queen Victoria, without question the greatest Queen

48.—Great Queens of History. By Linley Sambourne, June 19, 1897.

50.—"The Queen! God Bless Her!" By Linley Sambourne. November 29, 1899.



49.—"For Queen and Empire!!" By Tenniel, June 19, 1897.

the world has ever seen.

In No. 49 the Queen's subjects from all her nations proclaim her Jubilee and swear their devotion, and in No. 50 we hear the shout—"The Queen! God Bless Her!" coming to us from South Africa, to be echoed by everyone who reads these words.

THE place is Cuernavaca—that beautiful, remote, semi-tropical Mexican town of Morelos: the month is March, balmy, flowery, and lovely: the day a great fiesta one, which all the peon-Indian world, his wife and family—as also the animals—are hasting to celebrate, for the occasion is nothing more or less than the now almost obsolete "Blessing of the Animals," seen nowadays in Mexico only by those who live in or visit the remote and isolated pueblos or towns.

For many days preparations have been in swing for the joyous occasion: this you would realize had you been with us in the Mexican hotel in Cuernavaca, for not only does that hotel's landlord possess several "animalitos" himself, but our windows overlook a great poultry yard and corral, the inmates of which have been duly washed, brushed, painted, and decorated for the ceremony of to-day—to our great amusement and entertainment. The final adornments and finishing touches were given early this morning; so early, in fact, that at five o'clock, when the first bells began to chime out, we had to give up all hope of slumber: the lowing, bleating, cackling, quacking, baa-ing, squealing, and crowing was more than enough to "murder sleep."

Even when breakfasting two hours ahead of the usual time we can hear sounds betokening that the procession is already on its way to the cathedral yard, where the blessing is to come off. In the dining-room our waiter Felipe rushes distractedly about, for he has two dogs, a small brother, and a small donkey to escort to the ceremony, and with all the lazy people who will not take their chocolate and "pan dulce" for two hours more, how can he expect to get there in time for even one small word of blessing?

From the hotel windows, a few moments later, we are just in time to get a good view of mountain Indians and charcoal-burners who are trotting down the street, driving before them their rough little burros, all spick and span, and ready to be blessed. Being too suspicious to walk on the side-walks, as the rest of the crowd are doing, these charcoal-burners trot steadily along in the middle of the road, all shoulder to shoulder, while their flop-eared little burros keep close in front.

All of these little burritos have some sort of adornment, though of humble origin—for there are few ribbons and such decorations to be found in the charcoal-burners' remote mountains! One little grey-and-black donkey, however, jingles merrily a collar of tiny tin bells; his companion is brave in a necklace of pine-cones, while another little brown fellow trots along proudly in his saddle and necklace of fern and pine leaves. They have all been decorated as well with bright tail and head knots of the yellow mountain flowers, on all of which the blanketed charcoal-burners keep careful watch, for on no account must a donkey lose his decorations before he reaches the churchyard and the priest.

The procession is waxing thicker and thicker, now: in the middle of the road come horses, bulls, and the poor old patient oxen, the latter chewing steadily at their cuds, and now and then looking up and about, as if to say: "What does all this foolishness mean, and why aren't we at work in the alfalfa fields, with our wooden yokes on our necks instead of these silly flowers and leaves? What is going to happen, anyway?"

Just as we ourselves join the procession (for if we don't hurry our "reserved seats" on the cathedral wall will be gone!) the waiter Felipe, in his best fiesta clothes, and accompanied by his "little brother" and two dogs, joins us. Pancho, the burro, has gone on some time ago. The little brother also wears his best holiday clothes and a very fine silver-trimmed sombrero; but the finest of all sights is the small, fat puppy which he carries proudly in his arms and keeps careful watch of all the time; for, surely, never was there such a beautifully decorated "perrito" (little dog).

"A BEAUTIFULLY DECORATED 'PERRITO.'"

The puppy is a white one, to begin with, but one would never guess it from his present appearance. He has been washed and scrubbed until he fairly shines. His curly locks have been trimmed and combed, and he has been painted in the most elaborate and bewildering fashion—even his own mother doesn't quite recognise him, and circles about him with amazed stares and indignant "yaps."

Around his fat little stomach are three bright red stripes, around his neck a blue one, his tail has been dyed pink, and his ears yellow! A collar of tiny brass bells jingles and clicks as he wriggles his curly, dazed head, and on the tip of his short pink tail a bow of white and blue ribbons has been tied. At intervals the puppy's bearer pats and squeezes him, telling him to be a good perrito, for soon he is to be blessed by "*el padre!*" But poor puppy whines all the more, and wriggles pitifully in his efforts to find his mother. "Nasty ribbons and nasty collar," he mourns. Why can't he be left quietly at home, and why doesn't his mother come to him? Yap, yap, y-a-p!

Just as we are entering the churchyard gate we hear pitiful and heartfelt "meaows"—some poor pussy-cat is lifting her voice in lamentations *this* time! At first it is impossible to locate kitty: there are only birds and parrots in cages, close to us, where the "meaows" seem to originate from. But as we continue to peer about a little girl carrying a huge parrot-cage utters a reproving cry, "Afe, que gatito!" ("What a naughty cat"). And then we find that pussy has reason to cry and object, for *she* is shut carefully up in the parrot-cage, out of a crack of which her be-ribboned tail is hanging, unknown to her mistress, and to the great glee of several small boys, who are taking advantage of the opportunity to slily tweak and pinch it!

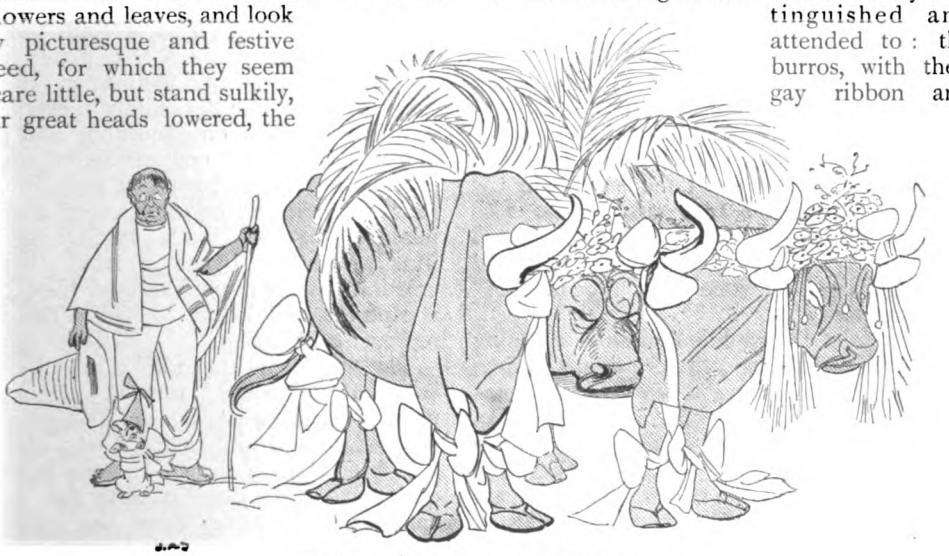
Having reproved the naughty boys and tucked pussy's tail safely into her cage, we hasten to ascend to the big, flat-topped cathedral wall, from which good Padre Tomás has assured us we will get a fine view of all that goes on.

The cathedral yard is a very huge one, but it is crowded now with animals of all sorts, sizes, and conditions, as well as social ranks, from the Jefe Politico's magnificent thoroughbred horse (which objects very much to being blessed) down to the meek, ragged little burro of Timoteo, the charcoal-seller.

There is a perfect sea of rebozo'd and tilma'd Indian and Mexican forms down below one, and every man, woman, and child of them has brought to be blessed one, two, and even three animals! There arises a perfect Babel of sounds: the lowing of cattle, the angry bellowing of a fighting-bull; horses neigh shrilly and prance about in fright; there is the pitiful, helpless baa-ing of goats and sheep; dogs bark loudly, while the cackling and crowing and jabbering of the poultry contingent is almost deafening. The crowd is so dense that, until the blessing commences, little can be distinguished; there is merely a view of a struggling, packed mass of people and animals, all working eagerly toward the stand from

which Padre Tomás, with two aiding acolytes, is to sprinkle and bless the "animalitos." Finally, however, silence and order have been enforced, and the cathedral yard gates are shut and locked. No more animals will be allowed to come in until the ones now present have been blessed and sent out. Padre Tomás, in his robes of office and attended by his two acolytes, ascends the steps to his stand; a great bowl of holy water is placed ready for him, and he beckons that the first animals be brought forward. So that now we can see the animals and their decorations.

Several huge ploughing-oxen come up first, very unwillingly, to be blessed. They are garlanded from hoofs to horns with wreaths of flowers and leaves, and look very picturesque and festive indeed, for which they seem to care little, but stand sulkily, their great heads lowered, the



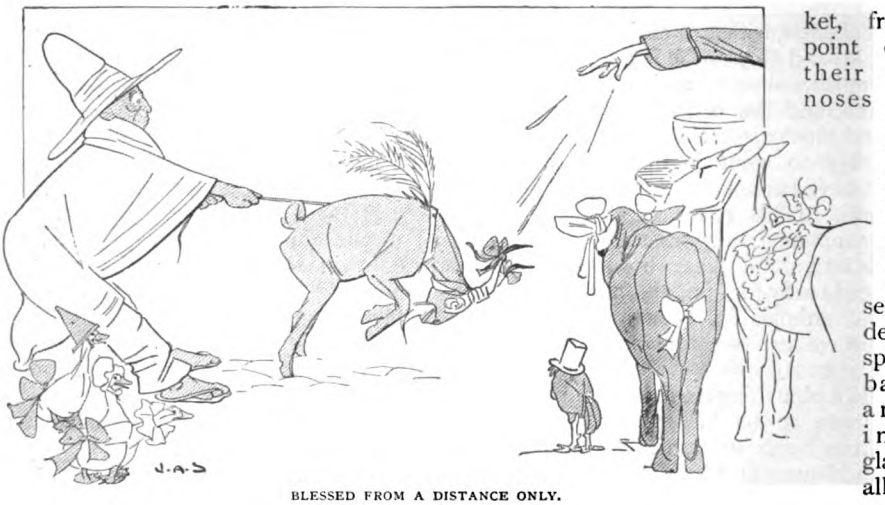
PLOUGHING-OXEN WAITING TO BE BLESSED.

while Padre Tomás sprinkles and blesses them, adjuring them in Spanish to be good and faithful to their several tasks, as the good saint who loved and blessed animals (St. Anthony) would have them be. And then, the ceremony (so far as they are concerned) being concluded, the huge beasts are taken away, and their place at the stand given up to two mules, these latter kicking and squealing and objecting both visibly and loudly to the holy water sprinkling and the blessing of Padre Tomás.

Then come, after these mules, more oxen, cows, several wicked-looking bulls, horses, more mules, and all the larger animals. There are so many of them that nearly three hours are consumed in their blessing alone. All of them are decorated in much the same way: the cows, bulls, and oxen are garlanded with wreaths of flowers and vines, while the blooded fighting-bulls have their horns gilded and wrapped about with gay ribbons. Everyone breathes more freely when these latter creatures are taken away, for they are very vicious, bellowing and pawing furiously all the while, and it requires strenuous efforts on the part of their owners to keep them quiet. Some of the cows are also very frisky, and leap about in the most alarming manner; everyone is glad when the last is seen of these horned and heeled creatures, and a large space is left for the bringing-up and blessing of the more peaceful burros, goats, sheep, and lesser animals.

The yard has so thinned out now that all of the remaining animals can be easily distinguished and attended to: the burros, with their gay ribbon and flower decorations, receiving special sprinkling and blessing at the hands of the priest. For these patient little animals are both beasts of burden, companions, and dear friends to the labouring classes of Mexico, and well deserve St. Anthony's blessing.

Numberless goats and sheep are here, too, for holy water and good words: there are long-horned old patriarchs among both the sheep and the goats, which have butted off most of their tissue paper and flower adornments, and by dint of hard efforts only are restrained from making for the priests, who bless them very warily and from a distance *only!* And then come the mothers, with their gay collars, bells, and ribbons, the cunning little lambs and kids frisking at their sides. Some of these babitos (little ones) are very prettily decorated, one jet-black kid



BLESSED FROM A DISTANCE ONLY.

being particularly noticeable in his collar, *waist-band*, and tail decorations of brilliant red flowers, with red ribbons tied to his sharp little horns. And then there is a white woolly lamb, decorated entirely in the Virgin's colours of blue and white, with forget-me-nots tied to his meek little head and neck. He is a beautifully behaved little lamb, and everyone cries, "Que bonita!" ("How pretty").

In spite of the rapidly diminishing throng of people and animals, the crowing, cackling, quacking, and barking noises seem to be as loud and strong as at first; but all of a sudden even louder and shriller sounds arise above the confusion. This is when the "pig-animals" (as the peons call them) are driven forward to be blessed.

A poor peon who lives miles away near Iguala has with untold trouble and difficulty brought an old mother pig, with her five small ones, to be blessed. The mother has rubbed off most of her decorations, and now chases wildly about, with loud and despairing squeals. "No," she shrieks; "I will *not* be blessed!" After her rushes the poor peon, with five small piglets wrapped safely up in his tilma, or blanket, from which point of vantage their wee pink noses poke inquiringly. "What *can* be the matter with naughty mamma-cita?" they seem to wonder. But, in spite of her babies' ashamed and inquiring glances and all the desperate efforts of her poor, perspiring master, the obdurate mamma still flees wildly in every direction but the right one, squealing and grunting. It is a very comical sight, and the spectators laugh and applaud poor, hot, red-faced Antonio, as he cajoles and threatens mamma pig with both voice and whip. Finally, however, when all the other pig creation has been sprinkled and blessed, she is captured and led up to Padre Tomás for reproof and blessing.

The dogs, on the whole, are the best-behaved "animalitos" present. Seeming to understand just what is meant, they go quietly up to the stand with their masters, and only frisk a little when the cold water is thrown on them. One dog, in particular, is very cunning, and "brings down the house" by standing up straight and begging, in the

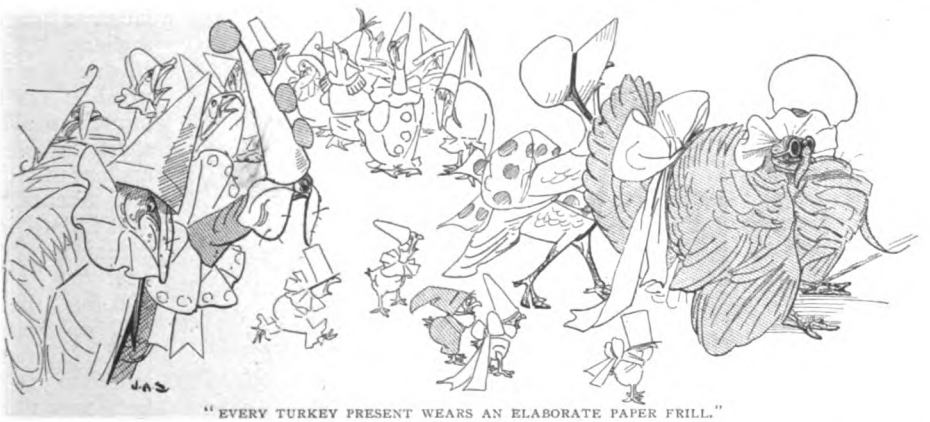
THE PEON AND THE PIG.

most gentlemanly and approved fashion, when his turn comes. He is a very nice curly dog, having a blue body and red legs, with a big spotted sash tied about him, and his small owner carries him from the scene proud and rejoicing.

The sun is high in the heavens now, and warned by that and pangs of hunger (for we breakfasted early) we look to see what time it is. If one will believe it, the blessing of the animals has been going on for seven hours! Even yet many "creatures" remain unblessed: all the chickens, ducks, turkeys, and other small beasties, both four and two-legged, are still awaiting their turn!

"last, but not least." For of all the truly comical things to be seen anywhere, in any land, the geese, ducks, turkeys, and other "criaturas" brought here for St. Anthony's blessing surely surpass all else! On their decoration has been expended endless labour and ingenuity. Murmurs of admiration and shrieks of laughter arise as the poultry are driven up to the priest's stand: not even Padre Tomás, tired and worn out as he is, can restrain his amused smiles. For the sight is such a truly comical one.

Every turkey present wears an elaborate paper frill about the neck, with large bows tied in front; paper caps, of all colours and



"EVERY TURKEY PRESENT WEARS AN ELABORATE PAPER FRILL."

Of the cats and kittens there seem to be hundreds, all elaborately adorned with neck and tail ribbons, and painted in stripes, spots, and figures. Several white rabbits have also been brought to be blessed, and they are very cunning and pretty, their long ears decorated with vari-coloured stars, and tissue-paper scarves tied about their necks. And, towards the last, one very weeping, red-eyed boy stumbles forward, carrying tenderly in his arms a very quiet and much-decorated rabbit; it is so still and quiet that people turn to look at it. Then they all murmur, pityingly, "Pobre" (poor one), for the bunny is dead! He had been sick for two days, but Roberto (his master) had hoped that he would at least live long enough to be blessed by the padre. But not so: on the very morning of St. Anthony's Day poor Bunny departed this life, but is still brought, in the decorations gaily prepared before his demise, for his first and last blessing.

Last, but not least, of all the "animalitos" come the poultry. When we enumerate their decorations you will understand why one says

designs, on the head; huge bows, of many-coloured paper or cloth, decorate their astonished legs; and some even wear flowing tissue-paper sashes. One very pompous bird not only wears, in addition to his other finery, a large paper-frilled night-cap, but blue goggles protect his small and thoroughly bewildered eyes. No wonder he gobbles indignantly and hysterically as he is dragged forward, along with his wife and children, to the blessing of Padre Tomás.

And the other two-legged "animalitos" are quite as comical and absurd. Nearly all of them are dressed and decorated just as are the turkeys, with the exception of the hens and gallos (fighting-cocks). The old hens, in particular, we do not think we can ever forget, so perfectly ridiculous are their make-up and general appearance. There is one clucking, distressed mother hen, attired in a short red Eton jacket (made of paper) and a pair of full and flowing bloomers; on her bewildered head rests a very coquettish nurse-maid's cap, which has worked down over one eye, and her wings are tied, carefully and elaborately, with white and blue ribbons!

Behind her scurry several small chickens, with many gold and silver stars pasted on their fluffy wings; ribbon bows adorn their clumsy, tottering legs, and tiny peaked caps their heads. Just behind these, in their turn, come a batch of fighting-cocks, most of them dressed in little suits of clothes, so cut as to leave the wings free. Around their necks the poor birds wear tall, stiff paper collars, and high hats or gay sombreros put the finishing touch to a bird-costume that is certainly about as odd and truly ridiculous as one may expect to see.

"A DISTRESSED MOTHER HEN."

There are still many queerly costumed birds about which we could tell funny things: the geese, waddling along in their paper trimmings and large caps; the ducks, quacking loudly and angrily in their unwonted decorations; guinea-fowls, frightened almost into fits and shrieking discordantly; while from their cages and perches green and yellow parrots chatter and shriek, and make, upon occasions, loud and impolite—not to say profane—remarks.

Very nearly every Mexican or peon owns a parrot, not to mention one or more mocking birds, and little green scolding "love birds." All of them have been brought for a blessing to-day, though we think that, for politeness' sake, the parrots should have been left at home, and forced to go without blessings! For, while prettily decorated, and their cages gilded and flower-adorned, these wicked birds cannot be made to appreciate the nature of blessings or holy water, and behave most disgracefully even while under the watchful eye of Padre Tomás and his assistant priests.

One big handsome "Loro" nods sleepily in his cage until he feels the first touch of holy water, but then he gives vent to a deafening torrent of yells and naughty Indian words. As this evil behaviour has no effect on the padre, who goes steadily on with his blessing, this unregenerate parrot proceeds to perform all sorts of acrobatic tricks, swinging himself upside down in his cage, balancing on his yellow head, and then on first one leg and the other, amid delighted roars of laughter from the audience! So that Padre Tomás, unable to hear himself speak, cuts short the blessing and has the wicked bird taken away.

It is late in the afternoon—long after four o'clock—before the last bird or beast is blessed, but we watch to the very last, and the big cathedral yard is entirely deserted when we climb down from our perch on the wall. As we go wearily and hungrily hotel-ward we see many painted and decorated "animalitos" frisking about the streets, and Felipe's white puppy, with his rejoicing mamma, meets us in the hotel patio. He (the puppy) no longer wears his ribbons and bell collar, but his mother is trying hard to lick him clear of his various stripes and streaks, and has partially succeeded, with the result that he is as non-descriptly coloured and odd a little object as one can imagine!

For a long time, too, you must be reconciled to seeing purple and pink cats about, red and green dogs, and even vari-coloured pigs, burros, sheep, and goats! Because all this paint and decoration goes with the blessing of St. Anthony, which is bestowed only once a year in Mexico—in other countries not at all, which cannot but seem a pity!

One Little Hour.

By Chris. Fleetwood.

"WOULD you be so kind as to put me in my road for Chilworth Park?"

"I was just about to ask you to do the same for me."

The two speakers surveyed each other with interest. She saw a man with grey streaks coming in the dark, close crop on his temples, with deep-set, humorous eyes, and a clean-shaven, clever mouth.

He saw a tall slip of a girl in a long, soft, white silk gown, with a quantity of hanging red-gold hair growing radiantly about a pale, clear-skinned, childish face, from which looked a pair of innocent grey eyes. Out of these last hope was swiftly vanishing.

"'THEN ARE YOU LOST, TOO?' SHE ASKED."

"Then, are *you* lost, too?" she asked, abruptly.

"I begin to believe I am," he replied.

"How dreadful," she said, with the unconventionality of deep dismay.

"Not altogether dreadful," he ventured, reassuringly.

"I call it thoroughly dreadful," she rejoined, impatiently. "How on earth are we going to get back?"

There was a pause, during which they looked at each other, and each took the other's measure — reservedly at first, then frankly, and finally with a smile, in which both accepted the situation with cheerfulness.

This look should be borne in mind. It was probably, together with the influences of the first spring day of the year, answerable for much that followed.

"Have you just come from the Primrose Fête in Chilworth Park?" she asked.

"Yes," he answered. "It bored me."

"So it did me," she remarked, cheerfully, and they felt the force of an additional bond.

"I came with some people I'm visiting," she volunteered.

"And I'm staying in the house. So we're both strangers, aren't we?"

"How wrong of you to leave your hostess," she said, reproachfully, ignoring his insinuation of another bond still.

He was silent, but he looked at her meaningly.

"I daresay you're thinking it was wronger of me to leave mine," she remarked, hastily.

"I'm not thinking anything so ungrammatical," he retorted.

"Grammar doesn't matter in the woods," she said. "In such very deep woods as these, nothing matters."

"I entirely and unreservedly agree with you," he answered, warmly.

"Well, you needn't be so abandoned about it," she said, chillingly. "It's very awful." There was another pause. "Besides," she added, unexpectedly, "it depends on the hostess."

"Of course it does," he agreed.

"What is yours like?" she asked.

"Oh, a regular great lady," he said, with a wave of the hand as though the memory bored him. "Rather a tiresome, old-fashioned sort. Smiles and bends about everywhere, you know. Wears brocades and a long nose. What's yours like?"

"Mine's a tiresome new-fashioned sort," she replied, slowly. "Smart and smoky and slangy and silly. Wears tight things all day, and very little at night."

"Don't," he said.

The girl looked at him with her child-like eyes. "Well, I won't," she said, docilely. She paused. "I feel," she said, "like a girl run away from school."

"And I like a boy ditto," said he.

They glanced at each other and laughed. It was a mutual kind of laugh. It marked a great step in the somewhat swift development of the situation. But the next minute her face changed, as if she had suddenly recollected the solemn aspect of the affair.

"When did you last meet a path?" she inquired, seriously.

"Ages ago," he replied, with equal solemnity.

"I never met one at all," she said, with a sigh. "I just walked into the first wood I came to."

"Over the hedge?" he asked, innocently.

"Through it," she replied, and then, remembering her dignity in haste: "That's not the kind of question you ought to ask, at all. I can't think how you can be so flippant. You seem to be constantly forgetting that we're lost."

"No, I don't. I remember it very well. It's a very awful position to be in. I won't be flippant any more."

But she was thinking deeply.

"Were we coming in totally opposite directions when we met?" she demanded.

"Totally," he answered, with a twinkle in his eyes.

"Then if we want to strike a path we must go either right or left," she said, firmly. "We'll go together, because it's safer. But which shall it be?"

"I'm sure I daren't say," he said. "Let's toss."

She smiled approvingly at this bright proposal, and made a wonderfully successful dive into the back folds of her white frock, whence she brought out an empty purse.

"I haven't a penny left," she said. "It's all gone in merry-go-rounds. What have you got?"

"Most of mine went in cock-shies," he replied, searching busily. "Oh, good! Here's a halfpenny! Now, which shall it be?"

"If I call heads it's right, and if I call tails it's left," she said, after some consideration.

"Oh, come now," he said, with a laugh.

"Come where?" said she. But she looked at him with eyes in which the irrepressible nonsense literally danced.

"Surely you know better than that?" he said.

"Well, it's an English halfpenny, so perhaps you'd better do it your English way," she said.

He paused, with the halfpenny uplifted between finger and thumb.

"Aren't you English?" he asked.

"No, I'm from Boston," she said. "Go on! Toss it up."

"Heads we go right, and tails we go left."

She danced an impatient little step, and he tossed it without further remark. The halfpenny fell to the ground, in the midst of a profound silence.

"You forgot to call," he said, looking at her with mirthful eyes.

"Oh, so I did," she answered, cheerfully. "What had I better call?"

"Try heads," he said, with a laugh.

So the next time she shrieked "Heads" in a voice that made the woods ring. Then they bent over the recumbent halfpenny with gleeful interest.

"Heads it is," he cried.

"Then we go right," said she.

They turned to the right side of the little clearing and began to push through the undergrowth. After exactly one minute's vigorous travelling she stopped, with a deep sigh.

"It's horrid being lost," she said, despairingly. "My hair keeps catching in trees."

"Never mind," he said, comfortingly; "it clears farther on."

"I do mind," she insisted. "I think it's dreadful; I never knew you could be lost in England. I thought if one walked ten minutes anywhere in England, one came out somewhere."

"I thought so too," he replied.

"Well, you should have known better, being an Englishman," she said, incisively.

"I'm not an Englishman."

"What are you, then?"

"I'm an Irishman."

"It's exactly the same!"

"It's not," he replied, indignantly.

She surveyed him carefully.

"'YOU FORGOT TO CALL,' HE SAID."

"No, it's not," she agreed. "You twinkle more than an Englishman does."

"I what?"

"You twinkle."

He burst into a shout of laughter, and she looked at him seriously, still considering.

"And you laugh well," she said, graciously. "It makes me want to laugh, too. When an Englishman laughs, it makes me want to cry."

"I'm glad you approve," he said.

"So am I," she replied, thoughtfully. "Think, if I were lost with a disagreeable person, or even an——" she paused.

"What were you going to say?" he demanded, with haste.

"Never mind," she replied.

"I do mind."

"Well, I'm not going to say it now," she remarked, with aggravating complacency.

"You shall," he said, vigorously. But this was as a match to tow.

She looked at him witheringly from head to foot.

"Apparently I am lost with a disagreeable person," she remarked, and turning on her heel she proceeded to make her way through the undergrowth in exactly the opposite direction to the one they had decided to take.

"You're going the wrong way," he said, emphatically. No answer. He hesitated, and then he followed her. The only notice she took of him was, with lamentable deliberation, to let all the twigs she passed fly back in his face, as he came behind her. He bore it with twinkling eyes and exemplary patience, till at last a branch struck him so sharply that it raised a long red mark on his left cheek. He started, and, the pain being sudden, gave vent to an involuntary exclamation. She turned round, and when she saw he was hurt, she flushed suddenly scarlet.

"Oh, I'm sorry, I'm sorry," she said, springing towards him. His hand was up to his face, and she pulled it away with both hers, like an agitated child.

To his astonished consternation he saw tears in her eyes. This moved him almost more than the occasion seemed to warrant.

"My dear little girl," he said, remorsefully, catching her hands in his, "for Heaven's sake don't cry! It's nothing! I swear it's nothing. I was a beastly coward to cry out!"

"It's all red," she said, with a shaking voice.

"Why, you blessed baby, it's always red, I assure you. It's my natural complexion. Fancy crying about it. You make me feel horribly ashamed. Please, don't, dear!"

"I'm not," she said, hastily.

She rubbed her eyes vigorously with a very small and much-belaced pocket-handkerchief, and emerged with an April face.

"How sweet of you," he said, earnestly.

"Sweet!" she said. "You'll not think it so when I tell you I did it on purpose." She paused to observe the effect of her confession; but before he could speak she added, hastily, "But I never, never meant to really hurt you. I'm truly sorry."

"SHE LET ALL THE TWIGS FLY BACK IN HIS FACE."

"It isn't worth it, indeed, indeed," he said.

She looked at him searchingly, then she said, "You ought to be a little sorry, too, you know."

"I am," he said, humbly; "I was a brute."

"I have every right to refuse to say what I don't want to say," she continued, with dignity.

"Indeed you have," he assented.

She paused and looked at him.

"But I'll say it now," she said.

He preserved a humble countenance.

"Thank you very much indeed," he replied.

"I was going to say how dreadful it would be if I were lost with a disagreeable person or even an ugly one."

"And don't you think me either?" he ventured, with great diffidence.

She hesitated. "No, I don't," she said.

Gratification struggled with humility in his countenance. "But I'm afraid my beauty is a little spoilt now," he remarked, and his voice shook, though whether with laughter or deep feeling, it would be difficult to say.

"No, it isn't! only a very little," she said.

She held out her hand, and added, wistfully, "We've made it up, then? We ought to be friends, you know, now we're lost together."

"We will be," he replied, with decision.

After this dramatic incident they proceeded amiably, guarding each other with great care from the danger of returning twigs. Overhead the trees bore the first green of spring: a soft sun looked down through veiling mists, primroses grew everywhere, and the birds were singing rapturously.

At last they pushed through into another clearing. It had a pool in the middle, and the sloping banks were thick with moss under the old beeches. She gave a cry of pleasure.

"Oh, how lovely and quiet it is," she said. "Could we not rest a little? I am so tired."

"Of course we can," he replied.

So they sat down together under a great beech by the water. The place was full of a waking stillness, and all the little gnats went buzzing over the pool.

"It's nice here," she said.

"It's idyllic," he answered, luxuriously stretching his long limbs on the moss.

"It's the nicest thing I've met in England so far," she went on.

"Have you only just come over?"

"A month ago."

"But you do not talk quite like an American girl," he said.

"Well, my mother is English, and I've had English governesses, you see," she explained, and then added, defiantly:—

"Any way, we Bostonians don't talk on high C through our noses, whatever you may think."

"I don't think it," he replied, with a laugh. "I know you talk charmingly. I've often been in Boston."

"Perhaps we know the same people," she said, with interest. "Let's find out and discuss them. That would be rather fun. Do you know Mrs. Crodie?"

"I know her sister."

"Well, now! How funny! So do I. At least, I've seen her often. Do you like her?"

"Very much indeed," he replied, as if with the warmth of some delightful recollection. "She's absolutely charming."

"Well, I don't agree with you," replied

his companion. "She's just like — a — a penguin, a smiling penguin. What people see in her, I can't imagine."

"If you knew her, you would understand that it's not so much what people see in her, as what they feel in her," he said, emphatically.

"Is she one of those numerous women who make up for their lack of beauty by an 'undefinable charm'?"

"She makes up for her lack of beauty by charms that are very definable indeed, I can assure you. And that was an uncommonly nasty little sneer."

He looked up at her with reproachful eyes, but she punched holes in the moss with the point of her parasol, and looked at them instead of at him.

"Besides, she can hardly have come into conflict with you. There are years between you."

"Oh, in America we grow up early," she said, and tossed her head.

There was a short silence. Then she suddenly threw her parasol away, and reached her hand down with relenting eyes.

"I'm sorry," she said. "It was a horrid little speech, and she is charming, and any way, we won't quarrel here over somebody in Boston, will we?"

"Not only that," he replied, grasping her hand, "but there's no question that the most charming people of all are those who possess the charms that are seen, as well as those that are felt!"

But she shook her head.

"I don't deserve that," she said.

"Well, perhaps you don't," he replied. "Still, I make you a present of it."

But another thought had struck him.

"Do you know I have never asked you your name?" she said.

"I know you haven't! Hadn't you better do so at once? I've got one all right."

"No," she said, sitting up energetically; "I've got an idea, a lovely one."

"Well?" he said, lazily. He was stretched at her feet, with his chin on his palms, and his eyes fixed on her flower-like face.

"Don't tell me your name, and I'll not tell you mine," she said. "We'll play a play."

"Good idea! What play shall we play?"

"We'll be people out of far away and long ago," she said. "This is the Forest of Arden, and you are Orlando and I am Rosalind."

"Exactly," he said. "You've hit it to a T. Orlando and Rosalind, after the boy business was over."

"You see," she went on, her grey eyes looking down at him full of mischief and mirth, "you don't know me and I don't know you, and we shall never meet again. It doesn't happen like this once in a hundred years. What we are in the world matters to neither of us; we'll keep the old world out of this."

"One memory unspoiled, eh?" he said. "A rare gift of the gods, Rosalind. I doubt if we shall manage it. Suppose we do meet in that same old world! What then?"

"We shall meet as though we had never met, of course," said Rosalind. "We must both promise that on our solemn words of honour."

"I promise," he said.

"So do I," she replied.

The two pairs of laughing eyes met and dared each other in mutual challenge.

"On your honour?" she said.

"On my word of honour," he answered. "What do you take me for? Now let's begin playing at once."

"We are playing," said she. "We began long ago. We began almost when we first saw each other."

They both laughed again.

"So we did," he rejoined. "What I meant was, let's go on."

So they played for an hour diligently, and with undeniable success. The play was marred by no plot, nor were the players disturbed by any thought of a critic: the dialogue seemed interesting, though it did not run upon strictly Shakespearean lines.

Rosalind grew thirsty, so Orlando made her a cup out of a mullein leaf, but he only let her drink the smallest sip, because he said a stagnant pool was never safe—an hygienic idea distinctly out of place in the Forest of Arden.

They talked quite seriously of men and matters, in an entirely nineteenth-century manner, for perhaps ten minutes, during which Rosalind delivered herself of some startlingly original views on Anglo-American politics, while Orlando listened in due submission, his hat well over his eyes. He also smoked, in unpardonable defiance of the unities, but let his cigarette go out so often that at last he threw it away.

The conversation frequently degenerated into the kind of nonsense usually described as "sheer," and was often interrupted by irresistible laughter.

Finally Rosalind went off into yet another mood, and teazed Orlando till she was tired, and he was cross, or said he was. When she had achieved this she contemplated his

indignant back for several seconds in silence, and then put her head against the old beech, and said, mournfully, that it was hard and "uncomfy." Orlando turned round, melted in a moment. He looked at Rosalind till struck five somewhere far away, reluctantly, as though Time were sorry, for once, to end a little hour. He helped her to her feet, and, as she knelt, her hands being in his, he bent down suddenly and kissed her. She

"SHE CONTEMPLATED HIS INDIGNANT BACK FOR SEVERAL SECONDS."

laughter forced them both to relenting, and what followed could certainly only have happened in the Forest of Arden. He sat down by her and slipped his arm between her and the tree.

"Try this," he said, "it may be softer."

Rosalind held back.

"Doesn't it matter?" she said, solemnly.

"Not one whit," answered Orlando, confidently. "In such very deep woods as these, you know, nothing matters."

She still hesitated.

"And we shall never, never meet again," he added.

This last speech, with its double-barrelled persuasion of present pathos and ultimate safety, was successful.

"It's quite sad," she said, and laid her head against his shoulder.

But the play was played out at last, and came to an end, as plays will. There was no ignoring the strokes of the village clock that looked up at him a little startled, but with the dawn of a mischievous smile in her eyes.

"By your own showing it doesn't matter," he said, quickly. "Rosalind and Orlando wouldn't have thought twice about it."

Then they went out into the close woods once more to find their way back to the world. Presently the sounds of mirth and jollity, as expressed by two brass bands playing different tunes in the same field, struck upon the ears of the truants. They stopped simultaneously, and looked at each other.

"We must come out at different places, you know," said Orlando.

"Yes, I suppose we must," replied Rosalind.

Mirth and regret struggled in the two pairs of eyes regarding each other.

"Good-bye, Orlando," said Rosalind; "hasn't it been fun, quarrels and all? And oh, hasn't it been silly?"

"Rosalind," said Orlando, "I feel that I

shall meet you so often in my dreams that it isn't necessary to say good-bye."

Rosalind contemplated the idea thoughtfully for a second.

"I don't often dream," she said, frankly. "I'll try to dream of you when I do! I sha'n't meet anyone so nice again in a hurry in the real world."

They shook hands, looking back into the sun-lit woods behind them with a sigh and a smile. They had separated, and gone some distance from each other, when Orlando suddenly turned. Rosalind stopped also, and looked back. Orlando came up breathlessly.

"Rosalind," he said, "I thought I wouldn't, but I will."

Rosalind opened her eyes in some astonishment at this enigmatical speech. The face of Orlando bore traces of shame struggling with amusement.

"You've done something wicked," she said, with sudden conviction, and she instantly and severely prepared herself for action.

"I have, but I'm sorry, I truly am. Remember, I'm telling it as Orlando. Rosalind would have forgiven him, especially if he had just been going away."

Her face softened.

"I saw you in the park," said Orlando, divided between penitent apprehension and a desire to laugh. "I had noticed you all the morning. I saw you go into the wood. I was awfully bored. I got away from my party, and I went in after you."

Rosalind's face was a study. Expressions so numerous as to be past describing sped across it, as she hastily reviewed the past. She stood speechless.

Orlando watched her in anxiety.

"Have I spoiled it all?" he said. "Oh, Rosalind, forgive me."

"Weren't you really lost?" she said, at last.

"I was," he said, eagerly. "I was entirely lost, as lost as you."

"You have indeed been playing," said Rosalind. The tears were perilously near her angry grey eyes.

"I don't deserve that you should mistake me," he answered, warmly. "Far from playing, upon my word of honour, I have not been so completely myself for years and years. And I have to thank you for it. If I have to think I troubled you——"

"Are you speaking as Orlando?" said Rosalind.

"I am not," he replied, with a sound between a laugh and a sigh. "I speak as a man of the nineteenth century, and a poor sort at that, I'm afraid, but at least a man to be humbly and lastingly grateful for a gift so rare and charming as the hour you have given me."

Their eyes met.

"Forgive me," he said, and his pleading smile was so infectious that hers dawned in spite of herself.

"It *was* fun, wasn't it?" she said, slowly.

He held out his hand, and she put hers into it.

"It's a mercy for you I'm Rosalind," she said, still half-pouting. "If I were—if I were not Rosalind I couldn't have forgiven you."

"If you think of it, it didn't—it hasn't altered anything really," he said. "It was only Orlando following Rosalind, very naturally, into a wood. There wasn't much harm in it, was there?"

"No," she said, after a minute. "Not in the Forest of Arden," and they laughed.

"Good-bye, Rosalind," he said.

"Good-bye," she answered.

"We shall never meet again."

"Since we can never meet again like this, I'm just as glad."

"Do you, on your side, know any reason why we shouldn't?" he asked, as if in spite of himself, with an odd look behind the laughter in his eyes.

"I do," she replied. "Do you, on yours?"

"I don't know," he answered, slowly.

"There's no hesitation about my reason," she said. "I'll show it you."

She put her left hand into her pocket; then she drew it out slowly and held it up. On the third finger of the girlish, unformed hand hung loosely a huge blazing diamond hoop.

"Oh!" he said; and after a minute, "Why don't you wear it?"

"I hate it," she said, calmly, and slipped it back into her pocket. "I've had it since I was fifteen. I'm nearly eighteen now." There was another pause. "Besides," she said, with a glance and a smile, "what did it matter? You and I have been Orlando and Rosalind! Our real past mattered as little as our real future will matter."

But he did not take his cue. He said, unwisely and impetuously, "Why did you tell me? It was to have been an unspoilt memory."

Rosalind looked up then with an indescribable expression, and the child of the woodland hour vanished from his sight.

"There isn't such a thing in the world, Orlando," she said.

There was yet another silence. Orlando's eyes were bent on the ground, but his mouth set slowly into an expression of grim determination.

"Show me that ring again," he said, shortly, without looking at her.

Rosalind took it out of her pocket, looking at him with wondering, dubious eyes. She held it out to him on the palm of her fair, little hand.

"Who gave that to you?" he said.

She flushed at his tone.

"I think I need not answer you when you speak so," she said, and made a movement to draw back her hand. But he caught it in his, and held it palm upwards, and stood so, looking down at it with a changing face.

"You *will* answer me," he said. "Who gave that to you?"

"No one you know," said Rosalind, with a catch in her breath.

"An American?"

"Yes."

"A friend of your people's?"

"Yes."

She answered him as though she were spellbound, but her eyes were growing wide with doubt and fear.

"BUT HE CAUGHT IT IN HIS, AND HELD IT PALM UPWARDS."

"Is he young or old?" said Orlando, unmovedly.

"He isn't very young," said Rosalind, with a sudden uncontrollable sob in her voice.

Orlando lifted his eyes and looked straight into hers, and so they stood, facing each other.

"Don't be frightened," he said, in a tone that was at once strenuous and calm. "There is nothing to be frightened at. Speak the truth. That's all that matters. Truth can harm no one—neither him, nor you, nor me. If you feel you want to lie, remember a lie is always a mistake, however much safer it may seem at the moment. Do you love this man, Rosalind? That's the point of the whole matter. Answer me."

"Oh, let me go, let me go," cried Rosalind. Terror at the sudden and unexpected crisis, which loomed dark and appalling before her, fear of herself, and of the man who stood demanding an answer to such terrifying questions, overwhelmed her suddenly.

He did not let her go.

She would not struggle with him, but all the colour receded slowly out of her face, and her breath came pitifully, like a frightened child's.

"Rosalind," said Orlando, "answer me."

"I am not Rosalind," she said, breathlessly.

"You are," said Orlando. "To me, any way. Answer me, Rosalind. If you say yes, I will go at once, and never trouble you again, and I will beg you on my bended knees to forgive me for my pertinacity. But my answer I must have. For the last time, do you love this man? Put everything else aside, and answer me like a gallant lady, Rosalind, as Rosalind was."

His voice shook with the earnestness of his appeal.

"It's so strange," said Rosalind, with a frightened sob.

"What does that matter, if it isn't *wrong?*" said Orlando, curtly.

In the short silence that followed each heard nothing but the other's agitated breathing. Then Rosalind lifted her head and looked at Orlando bravely through her tears of fear and bewilderment.

"I don't believe I do love him very

much," she said, in a shaking voice. "But mamma says I needn't."

Orlando laid his other hand over hers without a word. Speech failed him for the moment, and he would not presume by any hasty act upon the courage and truthfulness she had shown him.

At last he said, below his breath, "Then this is to be an unspoilt memory?"

"I never said so," said Rosalind, weeping.

"Don't cry, dear," said Orlando, tenderly. "There isn't anything to cry about. It's all over. I won't do anything more now, I promise."

"Nor say anything, either?" asked Rosalind, and she paused with hope dawning in her tear-drowned eyes.

"Not a single word, I swear," said Orlando; "at least, not now."

"But I've been a wicked girl," said Rosalind, in fresh despair.

"Wicked!" repeated Orlando.

"I wish you'd run away with me at once," she went on, amid her sobs. "It's the only thing left to do. I can't ever go home again now."

But he reassured her and comforted her, and soothed her till she took heart again, and when her pluck had finally reasserted itself she set about defining their mutual position and their future behaviour with businesslike promptitude.

"If we come out at different parts of the wood," she said, cheerfully, "no one will guess we've ever seen each other. Then we'll go up to the house, and you'll be introduced to me at supper to-night, and then we'll meet off and on for a time, and I'll say I can't marry Stanborough whatever mother says, and then in about a year you can begin falling in love with me. That's to say, if you care to, of course," she added, hastily. "You needn't unless you like, as far as I'm concerned."

"Can't do it," said Orlando.

"Why not?" said Rosalind, with dismayed reproach in her eyes.

"Done already," said Orlando, solemnly.

"In this one little hour?" said Rosalind, incredulously. But she blushed as she spoke.

"Exactly," replied Orlando. Then he added, dejectedly, "It's the other that will be the difficult part of the business."

"What other?" asked Rosalind.

"Making you fall in love with me," replied Orlando.

Not a word said Rosalind. She fixed abstracted eyes upon the horizon, and hummed a little tune. Orlando sighed, and Rosalind's song was suddenly interrupted by her lips curving into an uncontrollable and exquisite smile. But she would not look at him.

"Give me that ring," said Orlando, suddenly. Her eyes instantly widened, but she gave it him silently, if apprehensively.

Orlando dropped it as though it burnt his fingers. Then he set his heel upon it and ground it into the moss.

"Oh!" said Rosalind.

"There's another," said Orlando, hurriedly pulling off his signet-ring. "Just till——"

But Rosalind backed, with her hands behind her.

"You've forgotten all my plan," she said, with threatening tears. "You are silly. Besides, I've got to give Stanborough his ring back."

"Oh, so you have," said Orlando, ruefully. He stooped, with a disconcerted air, and worked the ring out of the moss with one reluctant forefinger. Rosalind watched him with a serious face.

"Now I'm going," she announced, when Stanborough's ring was safely in her pocket. "And you'll please not to know me when you see me."

She paused, and added, solemnly, "Perhaps you'll not like me at all in 'real life.' I hadn't thought of that. However, I suppose we must risk it. You know, of course, I am not really one bit like Rosalind?"

"You are Rosalind," said Orlando, firmly. "And I am Orlando. And you're going to be Rosalind all your life. So now you know."

Rosalind was already some paces from him. She stopped and looked back over her shoulder, at first doubtfully, then mischievously, and, finally, with a sudden sweet, soft smile.

"Well, I don't so much mind," she said, and the next instant she was gone.

The Magic of Hairdressing.

By Florence Burnley and Kathleen Schlesinger.

[*Photographs specially taken by George Newnes, Limited.*]

1.—Miss Decima Moore in ordinary dress.

IF manners make the man, then surely hair makes the woman, outwardly at least. The hairdresser is the wizard who with magic touch transforms woman and bids her at will pass from century to century, ever young, ever fair, taking up and laying down personalities irrespective of time and nationality. Of this the photographs given here form a practical illustration.

Miss Decima Moore was interested enough in our little scheme to help us in carrying it out, and so thoroughly did she enter into the spirit of it that, with a patience above praise, she cheerfully endured things untold at the hands of our wizard, Mr. John Riek, the chief hairdresser at the establishment of Mr. K. Robert, 16, Great Russell Street.

Mr. Riek having declared himself ready to dress the hair in imitation of any picture, a selection of characteristic styles was made; these were sketched by an expert, and delivered to Mr. Riek for study and preparation. It was in the studio of The Strand Magazine that Miss Moore underwent the various transformations which the camera then fixed for us one by one, and the aim throughout has been to show what the art of the coiffeur can do, independently of dress, to impart to a woman a new personality, such as she would have presented had she lived in days of old, or in far-distant lands.

In the first picture Miss Moore was her own hairdresser, as, by the way, she always is, even at the theatre, and constant practice has made her wonderfully skilful and quick. For some of her parts she had to dress her hair as many as five times during the one performance, and of course twice a week, when there was a *matinée*, that number was doubled in the course of the day.

It is hardly necessary to explain that in the next photograph (Fig. 2) Miss Moore's hair

2.—The "Edna May" style.

was dressed in the American style of to-day, made so familiar to us by Miss Edna May in "The Belle of New York"; the resemblance is quite unmistakable, and yet the head-dress is alone responsible for this likeness, for the two artists have very little in common in the usual way.

The simple and charming style called *Pouf à la Saporité* (Fig. 3) was one of the few pretty head-dresses invented during the commencement of the reign of Louis XVI., and which stands out as a contrast among the monstrous exaggerations of the coiffeur's art prevalent at that time, and of which the reader will judge later.

3.—THE POUF À LA SAPORITÉ—REIGN OF LOUIS XVI.

There is no great difficulty in disposing the hair at the back of the head in a solid coil, to which is pinned the long-drawn-out cap that has been well-boned to keep it tense, for although made only of soft muslin and lace, it must bear the weight of the tress suspended so gracefully by a ribbon.

The next was quite a *chef-d'œuvre*, and it was wonderful to see the lateral erections growing under Mr. Riek's deft fingers: first the wavy side-puffs disposed over pads, then the ribbon-bound twists brought round from the back over the head and round the ears, the ends being hidden beneath a tiny, closely-fitting coif of velvet, richly broidered with pearls; the bands of gold filigree were then laid on, and the crown gave the regal finishing touch to this style, copied from a statue of the fourteenth century (Fig. 4).

4.—FOURTEENTH CENTURY STYLE.

Thanks to the hairdresser's cunning it was but a step from the fourteenth century in France to the present day in Tartary. In the picture the coiffure struck us as anything but pretty, although very interesting, on account of its intricacy; we were, therefore, most agreeably surprised when Miss Moore emerged from the wizard's hands in the guise of a Manchu matron, to find that after all even this style was exceedingly becoming to her. Both back and front views (Figs. 5 and 6) are given, so that our readers may see how the whole art consists in dividing the hair into flat bands and passing them in and out of the gigantic slide a foot long, which may be of ivory, metal, or even of wood, in which case it looks pretty covered with coloured silk.

It is not often that Western civilization borrows its fashions from the savage tribes of the great Dark Continent; but this may yet come to pass, strange and unlikely as it may appear. We now behold Miss Moore with her pretty, fair hair dressed *à la négresse* from the Gold Coast (Fig. 7). The waves of her hair, like those of the angry sea, having been coaxed into smoothness by means of oil judiciously applied, it was then turned back over a round pad, while the ends, divided into two strands, were bound round tightly with cord into the semblance of horns, which are worn by the native women in honour of the cattle that forms their greatest treasure.

Another work of art, the *Casque à la Clorinde* (Fig. 8), emanating from the fertile brain of one of the Court hairdressers of Marie

5.—HEAD-DRESS OF A MANCHU WOMAN OF THE PRESENT DAY.

Antoinette, further increased our admiration for the skill of Mr. Riek, who proceeded to

6.—BACK VIEW OF THE ABOVE.

lay his foundations firmly and securely, having planned out the whole edifice the day before. Without ever a pause or a moment's hesitation, his quick, nervous fingers moulded the hills and the valleys, the long curls and the loops, and finally he fixed the ornaments,

7.—HAIR AS WORN BY A NEGRESS OF THE GOLD COAST.

after having duly let fall on his work a shower of *poudre d'iris*, the snow of years which Fashion dictated should level youth and age.

During the thirties a violent war was waged in the elegant world of Paris between partisans of the two styles called *bandeaux* and *touffes*, according to whether flat bands of

8.—CASQUE À LA CLORINDE—REIGN OF LOUIS XVI.

9.—THE "MALIBRAN" COIFFURE.

hair or curly tufts predominated. Then came Malibran's wonderful impersonation of *Desdemona* in Rossini's "Otello," and this sweet singer healed the bitter strife by blending the two antagonistic styles into one (Fig. 9). The flat bands of hair on each side of the two partings were arranged into four rows of long, horizontal curls pinned down close to the head and concealing the ears; while the hair from front and back was gathered up into a fanciful loop on the top of the head, encircled by a jewelled band, and finished off by a rose.

The curious mask worn as part of the head-dress in the next illustration now assumed shape, and Mr. Riek was busy with his grease-brush. We may as well confess at once that, in order to spare Miss Moore the unpleasantness and inconvenience of oily locks, the short row of what in the Lovale women of West Central Africa would be matted with mutton fat into straggly, rope-like ends on each side of the mask was added skilfully without more ado (Fig. 10).

From barbarous Central Africa to the

10.—HEAD-GEAR OF A NATIVE OF LOVALE, AFRICA.

11.—AS WORN BY QUEEN MARGARET OF NAVARRE.

Court of Catherine of Medici, with its refinements of fierce cruelty and cunning, is morally really hardly a step. What could be more revolting than the scenes of savage butchery which took place on the Eve of St. Bartholomew? Queen Margaret (Margot), daughter of the crafty Catherine, and wife of Henry of Navarre, whose typical head-dress Miss Moore is now wearing (Fig. 11), saw something of the horrors of this terrible night, for the sanctity of her sleeping chamber was invaded by a hard-pressed, wounded man, fleeing from his butchers, the Queen's archers. The wretched fugitive threw himself upon the Princess for safety, entwining his body round hers that his pursuers might fear in striking him to

strike also the daughter of their Queen. In spite of this he only escaped being massacred before her very eyes by the intervention of the Captain of the Guard. The deeds of the poor, untutored savage pale by the side of the scenes which have disgraced civilized and Christian Europe. No woman, therefore, need suffer qualms in adopting ideas for a fancy head-dress from any of the savage fashions illustrated in this article, providing, of course, they are becoming to her style of beauty; unfortunately, the rest of the costume does not lend itself to imitation in this country.

12.—AS WORN BY QUEEN ELEANORE-MARIE OF POLAND.

Queen Margaret's coiffure will remind many, no doubt, of the ill-fated Mary of Scots, and this is not singular, for they were brought up together at the French Court. A small, fantastically-shaped cap of velvet or brocade, which does not show in the photograph, completes this head-gear.

The impersonation of Queen Eleanore-Marie of Austria, Consort of Michel, King of Poland, brings back to us the flowing love-locks of Cavalier maidens, which are very generally becoming, and may well be copied without much difficulty (Fig. 12).

It was at the Court of the beautiful Marie Antoinette (Fig. 13) that the status of the hairdresser was most exalted. Léonard, the illustrious artist appointed to dress the Royal locks, drove in his coach, and was a very great man indeed. The lovely young Queen had a great weakness at all times for fascinating new coiffures, and, alas! this was indirectly the means of bringing the beautiful head to the scaffold. Léonard was so indispensable to the Queen, that he made one of the party on the night of the famous escape to Varennes—herein lay the folly afterwards so bitterly expiated—and it was owing to some erroneous information, quite innocently given by him to the troops of the Marquis de Bouillé, that the latter failed in the hour of need, and thus the disaster of Varennes occurred. The Royal fugitives were stopped and taken back to Paris, where captivity and an ignominious death awaited them.

13.—THE "MARIE ANTOINETTE" STYLE.

We must now turn back the pages of history until we find ourselves in the picturesque days of the Middle Ages. We see here the style of headgear worn by Court beauties towards the end of the fourteenth century (Fig. 14). The hair was parted in front and puffed out on each side under a jewelled net; then two plaits, starting from the back, were brought round the temples and surmounted by a simple wreath of daisies; a strand of hair bound with ribbons hung down the back, and on the head was the *escoffion* or *bourrelet* made of costly fabrics studded with gems. It resembles nothing so much as the very prosaic sand-bag which was formerly used to keep out draughts from windows and doors.

Next we have an opportunity of seeing how

14.—FOURTEENTH CENTURY STYLE.

demure Miss Moore looked with her hair dressed in the style made familiar by the youthful portraits of our beloved Queen about the time of her coronation (Fig. 15).

The impersonation of a *châtelaine* of the fifteenth century (Fig. 16) was but the matter of a few minutes; the only difficulty was to dispose the gauze scarf with just the proper effect. (In spite of our care it seems to have slipped a little on the right side, which makes one long to tuck it in.) It winds in and out of the *bourrelet*, the crossed ends hanging down the back. Miss Moore here quite gives the illusion of having stepped out of one of the exquisitely illuminated manuscripts of the period.

16.—FIFTEENTH CENTURY STYLE.

When we call the next (Fig. 17) a *Coiffure*

15.—AS WORN BY HER MAJESTY BEFORE HER CORONATION.

17.—COIFFURE À LA GRECQUE. 1800.

à la Grecque it must be understood that it belongs to the classical revival at the end of last century in Paris, when Greek draperies and designs were in vogue and Louis David

18.—HEAD-DRESS OF THE BALONDO TRIBE, AFRICA.

painted his celebrated classical pictures. This elegant edifice quite defies description, and, although it was erected under our very eyes, it only left a confused impression of curls—short curls, long, corkscrew curls, and tiny little tendrils like those of the vine.

In presenting Miss Moore surrounded by this striking halo (Fig. 18) we are making no attempt to canonize a new saint; she has merely adopted the head-gear of a woman of the Balondo tribe in Africa, and for indoor wear she could hardly have a more becoming one, nor is it at all difficult to carry out.

"Britannia rules the waves" (Fig. 19) is the British adaptation of a head-gear invented at the end of last century in France, where it was called *à la Belle Poule*, in memory of the naval exploits of the ship while pursued by the British *Arethusa*. This gallant little ship, conspicuously flying the Union Jack, rides at anchor on the billowy waves of Miss Moore's hair with very pretty effect. The little craft, which figured on the first prize at one of the Covent Garden Fancy Dress Balls this season, was made of white silk, covered with tiny silver spangles.

19.—"BRITANNIA RULES THE WAVES" COIFFURE.

20.—AS WORN BY H.I.H. PRINCESS ARISUGAWA TADA OF JAPAN.

The head-dress of H.I.H. Princess Arisugawa Tada of Japan (Fig. 20), copied from a portrait in Mrs. Hugh Fraser's delightful book, "A Diplomatist's Wife," is admirable in its severe simplicity, but was nevertheless not an easy one to execute. Miss Moore's rebellious locks would not be coaxed into relinquishing their

pretty waves altogether; the great point was to secure perfect symmetry and that coyness of the hair over the forehead—so loth to part and yet not daring quite to meet! The Princess's head-dress is very different from the style popularized by the "Mikado" and the "Geisha": the wearer is adorned most by its extreme simplicity, and by the entire absence of gems, flowers, ribbons, and gimcracks, and it quite coincides with Miss Moore's own taste, which is averse to all ornaments for the hair.

From a portrait of Marie Anne Caroline, Duchess of Tuscany, we obtain an imposing and regal coiffure (Fig. 21) which is easily carried out. We have first the curly side-tufts *à la Malibran;* then well set back on the head a wide diadem of hair finely plaited and ornamented with a circlet of filigree, and on

21.—AS WORN BY THE DUCHESS OF TUSCANY.

the forehead a jewelled diadem or tiara. For ordinary everyday wear this elaborate style would not commend itself to the present generation with its healthy love of out-door life and exercise, but for courtly functions and princely receptions it imparts a certain air of regal magnificence and dignity.

This gigantic erection (Fig. 22) is copied from a caricature of the end of last century, ridiculing the lengths to which vanity and folly carried the feminine headgear in France. The three white feathers (expressly made for us) are 4ft. high and correspondingly top-heavy. It was indeed a triumph of skill to poise them thus at the side of the head, and to

22.—STYLE AT THE END OF THE LAST CENTURY.

build up that extravagant structure of long curly tufts.

What a relief for Miss Moore, and perhaps

23.—AS A BYZANTINE PRINCESS—THIRD CENTURY.

24.—POUF À LA CERF-VOLANT.

also for the reader, to cast aside all this weight of exaggeration and to revert to the severe majesty of the Byzantine Princess of the third or fourth century, to which her features lend themselves so admirably (Fig. 23).

In the next impersonation (Fig. 24) we draw again upon the well-nigh inexhaustible fund of curiosities of the golden age of hair-dressing at the Court of Marie Antoinette. This style was glorified by the name of *Pouf à la Cerf-volant;* but where is the tail of the kite?

The office of Court hair-dresser was no sinecure in those days, and his inventive genius was severely taxed. "Give us something new and wonderful!" was the daily cry of the Court beauties as he drove from one hotel to the other, and the results were more astonishing than becoming or artistic.

26.—FROM A CARICATURE OF THE STYLE WORN A CENTURY AGO.

The Infanta Marie, daughter of Philip III. of Spain, dressed for her marriage with the Emperor Ferdinand III., furnishes us with a stiff and ugly example of the reign of the cap (Fig. 25). All the hair is spread out round the face, while a stiff little white cap, edged with

25.—AS WORN BY THE INFANTA MARIE AT HER MARRIAGE.

lace, fits closely to the back of the head and spreads out under the hair at the sides. The chronicles of the time tell us that when the Emperor met his bride thus arrayed on the borders of his empire he was bitterly disappointed in her; but, then, she was not at all like Miss Moore.

In conclusion comes this monstrous caricature (Fig. 26), derived from the same origin as the one with the enormous feathers. It is built upon a solid foundation of enormously long rolls of curls, thickly powdered, and is, of course, heavy and cumbersome in the extreme.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

LVIII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

HARD LINES FOR THE SPEAKER.

"THIS sitting up merely to adjourn the House and to put out the lights is not only useless as a matter of business, but it really impedes business, knocks up the Speaker, and renders him inefficient for the following day." Thus Speaker Denison, writing in his diary, under date Friday, 25th of March, 1870. The anguished words were wrung from him at the close of a hard week, chiefly spent in the Chair. The point is one I, some years ago, ventured to raise in these columns. To ordinary business people it seems necessary only to state the case to have the absurdity corrected.

When the House gets into Committee of Supply the Speaker leaves the Chair, the proceedings being thereafter presided over by the Chairman of Ways and Means, seated at the table. As a rule, on these occasions the Speaker is relieved between four and five o'clock, and, as the Committee will peg away till the hour of adjournment, the right hon. gentleman might reasonably count upon a restful evening, getting early to bed. It is, however, an ancient custom that the formality of adjourning the House shall be performed by the Speaker in person. The consequence is that, when at midnight Committee of Supply closes, the Speaker is routed out of his house, compelled to put on wig and gown, return to the Chair, and, having recited the list of orders on the paper, observes, "The House will now adjourn."

MR. J. W. LOWTHER, THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

As a rule the performance does not take more than five minutes. But consider the inconvenience it imposes—imprisonment at home throughout the evening and compulsory sitting up to midnight.

That the Chairman of Ways and Means can accomplish the ceremony without weakening the foundations of the Empire is proved by the fact that on the occasional indisposition of the Speaker he is called upon to do so. On the very night this anguished cry was wrung from the soul of Mr. Speaker Denison he had settled with Mr. Dodson, then Chairman of Ways and Means, that he should take the Chair and adjourn the House. "He did so. No inconvenience arose to anyone. But the relief to me was very great. I got to bed and to sleep about eleven o'clock and had a good night, which quite restored my powers."

Since John Evelyn Denison finally left the Chair of the House of Commons the deeply rooted prejudice against reform of Parliamentary procedure has been dug up with beneficial results. But this useless weed still cumbers the ground.

JOE COWEN.

Fourteen years have sped since Joseph Cowen shook the dust of the House of Commons from off his feet and retired to his hermitage at Blaydon-on-Tyne. The period is not long in history, but the effect of such lapse of time upon the *personnel* of the House of Commons is striking. There are few public bodies of equal number in which the outward drain is so strong and steady. I doubt whether there are in the present Parliament a hundred men who sat in the same House as Joseph Cowen. Yet his memory still lingers over the historic scene, and to the very few admitted to his close friendship the memory of his rare personality will ever smell sweet and blossom in the dust.

There is no position in public life Cowen might not have achieved had he devoted himself to the pursuit. His splendid intellectual gifts were trained by constant study. Endowed with a far-reaching and tenacious memory, he remembered most things he read, and he read everything. As an orator of the classic style he was unsurpassed in the House of Commons. His was the antique manner, which consisted of making speeches as contrasted with debating. He

rarely took part in the give-and-take of Committee work. When the nation throbbed with excitement in face of a great political crisis Cowen rose to its height, his splendid oratory dominating a breathless House of Commons. His speech on the Empress of India Bill, and one in support of the Vote of Credit moved in 1878, when Russia was reported to be at the gates of Constantinople, will never be forgotten by those who heard them. They had undoubtedly been elaborately prepared, and were, I believe, actually recited from memory. But there was about them no smell of the midnight lamp. The picturesque figure with its strangely-fashioned garments, the strong Northumbrian burr into which his voice lapsed when he was deeply stirred, were adjuncts rather than drawbacks to the perfectness of the achievement.

JOE, MR. G., AND DIZZY.

Cowen was as gentle hearted as the tenderest of women, a feature which did not wholly comprise his kinship with the other sex. Oddly enough, in view of his ways of life, he was not free from personal vanity, and was implacable where it had once been affronted. Hereby hangs a tale, the basis of which had much to do in shaping his life, and even in affecting political parties in the House of Commons. As he told it me himself there can be no harm in quoting it in aid of an estimate of his character.

THE HERMIT OF BLAYDON-ON-TYNE.

On the eve of the General Election, 1868, Mr. Gladstone paid a visit to Tyneside and became the guest of Cowen's father, then Mayor of Newcastle. Sir Joseph Cowen's influence, locally predominant, was placed unreservedly at Mr. Gladstone's disposal, and undoubtedly did much to swell the wave of Liberal enthusiasm that spread through the north-east of England. The great statesman was quick to notice his host's shy son, and frequently conversed with him. Shortly after Cowen was, in 1873, returned to the House of Commons to represent Newcastle-on-Tyne he chanced to meet Mr. Gladstone in the division lobby. Naturally he expected some recognition. But the Premier, with his head in the clouds, probably troubled by the growing revolt that had foredoomed his Government, passed by unheeding. Cowen was not the man to run after him with reminder of former meetings. Probably he largely contributed to the unfortunate incident by shyly skirting the lobby wall and carefully refraining from challenging the great man's glance. However it be, the incident rankled in a sensitive mind, and was the beginning of the end of an estrangement that from first to last cost Mr. Gladstone dear.

Disraeli's procedure on this particular line was as characteristic as was Gladstone's. He early noted the strange-looking member for Newcastle, with his home-made clothes and his billy-cock hat. After his speech on the Vote of Credit, Dizzy, with sweet casualness, happed upon Cowen in the same division lobby where Gladstone had unconsciously snubbed him. He fell into conversation with him, extolled his speech, and made a valuable friend.

THE "NEWCASTLE CHRONICLE."

Though Cowen's manner was almost childlike in simplicity, and his shyness sometimes embarassing to others, as well as to himself, he was one of the keenest-sighted, shrewdest men of business born to canny Northumberland, His dealings with the *Newcastle Chronicle* illustrate two sides of his character. His proprietorial connection with the paper was purely accidental, and, to begin with, as unwelcome as it was unpremeditated. An earlier proprietor found difficulty in making both ends meet. In such circumstances he followed the not unfamiliar course of going for help and counsel to Joe Cowen. From time to time loans were made without leading to permanent re-establishment. In the end Cowen was obliged to take the paper on his own back. Having come into absolute possession he brought to bear upon the concern his intuitive knowledge of affairs, his shrewd common-sense, his trained business habits. In a very few years the *Newcastle Chronicle* reached the position it still deservedly holds as one of the most influential and, I should

say, one of the wealthiest newspapers in the provinces.

A PUBLIC BENEFACTOR.

During the greater part of the time he sat in the House of Commons Cowen nightly transmitted by telegraph to his journal a London Letter luminous with political insight and knowledge of affairs. He wrote nearly as well as he spoke, but in quite a different style. He was as severely simple when he had pen in hand as he was ornate when on his legs addressing crowded audiences either at Westminster or from a provincial platform.

A SHADOW OF THE PAST.

HIS PARTICULAR FRIENDS.

Wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice, I doubt whether Cowen spent £200 a year strictly on himself. His charities were boundless, though, so far as I know, his name never figured in the advertised list of public subscriptions. Struggling nationalities in any part of the world commanded not only his sympathy but his purse. One night in the lobby of the House of Commons Cowen was having what he dearly loved, a gossip with intimate friends. The conversation turned upon some severe process just instituted by order of the Czar against certain students in St. Petersburg. Cowen talked of them by name, and gave some particulars of their private history.

"I believe," said Sir Wilfrid Lawson, "that Cowen knows every conspirator in Europe."

"Yes," said A. M. Sullivan, with whose chivalrous nature Cowen had much in common, "and he keeps half of them."

One mark Cowen left on procedure in the House of Commons, by which it nightly profits in the current Session. In the Disraeli Parliament, 1874–80, the Irish obstructionists, then in full vigour, made the most of the waste of time involved in putting questions. Night after night they crowded the paper with lengthy interrogations. In accordance with habit established in quieter times, when the Speaker running his eye down the list called members in succession, each as he got up read every word of his question. The consequence was that, the House then meeting for public business at half-past four, it was frequently six or half-past six before the Orders of the Day were reached.

One night Cowen quietly submitted to the Speaker the proposal that, the questions being printed on the paper, there was no necessity for reading their text. The member in charge of a question might indicate it by citing its number.

If this simple, business-like proposal had been made from the Treasury Bench, or

THE CONSPIRATORS OF EUROPE.

from any member of the Opposition other than Joe Cowen, the Irish members would have cheerfully spent nights in resisting it. Cowen was their friend and ally. It would not do to publicly affront him. Thus it came to pass that in a few minutes, without formal resolution or debate, the Speaker promptly assenting, there was wrought a reform in procedure that in an ordinary Session saves the House of Commons an aggregate of time that may be measured by days.

"TRANQUIL INDIFFERENTISM."

Under date Christmas Day, 1897, Cowen wrote to me a letter, in which there is an interesting personal note on his oratory.

"I am glad you were pleased with my remarks at the Jubilee banquet. My object in handing you the little pamphlet was to give you a synopsis of my views on national affairs and not a specimen of my mediocre gifts of expression. I think we agree generally on the trend of events, but your friendship leads you to overestimate my literary and speaking capacity. I have few of the attributes of a genuine orator—enthusiasm, imagination, and bursts of fiery words. All I aspire to is a clear and terse exposition of principles and facts. I am too imperfectly endowed with the ordinary incentives that move men in public life—the yearning for applause or the desire of power. A kind of tranquil indifferentism deprives me of the oratorical skill to please, conciliate, or persuade. But I have drifted into an unpardonably lugubrious and personal strain quite out of keeping with this festive season."

"THE SOUND OF A VOICE THAT IS STILL."

The pamphlet alluded to is a reprint of a speech delivered by Cowen at the Diamond Jubilee celebration in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. I quote a passage illustrating his oratorical style and testifying to the lofty spirit of sane Imperialism of which Cowen was an apostle long before it became the cult of to-day. As a piece of glowing eloquence it is worth preserving:—

"There have been empires which have covered a large area, and some which have possessed a greater population, but there have been none at once so dissimilar and yet so correlative, so scattered and yet so cohesive, as that of Great Britain. There have been races who have rivalled us in refinement, but none in practical ability. Greece excelled us in the arts of an elegant imagination. But she was more ingenious than profound, more brilliant than solid. Rome was great in war, in government, and in law. She intersected Europe with public works, and her eagled legions extorted universal obedience. But her wealth was the plunder of the world; ours is the product of industry.

"The city states of ancient, and the free towns of mediæval, times aimed more at commerce than conquest. Wherever a ship could sail or a colony be planted their adventurous citizens penetrated, but they sought trade more than territory. Phœnicia turned all the lines of current traffic towards herself. But she preferred the pleasant abodes of Lebanon and the sunlit quays of Tyre to organizing an empire. Arms had no part in her growth, war no share in her greatness. Carthage, which, for a time, counterbalanced Rome, robbed the ocean of half its mysteries and more than half its terrors, but she did little to melt down racial antipathies. Venice in the zenith of her strength gathered a halo round her name which the rolling ages cannot dissipate. Holland, by her alliance of commerce and liberty, sailed from obscurity into the world's regard. Spain and Portugal drew untold treasure within their coffers, but its possession did not conduce to national virtue.

"None of these States, with their diverse qualities and defects, had imperial aspirations, except Spain. Most of them were only magnified municipalities. But the volume and value of their trade, although large for the time, was meagre when compared with ours. British wealth is unparalleled in commercial history. Add Carthage to Tyre, or Amsterdam to Venice, and you would not make another London. All things precious and useful, amusing and intoxicating, are sucked into its markets. But mercantile success, although it implies the possession of self-reliance and self-control, of caution and daring, of discipline and enterprise, if unaccompanied by more elevated impulses, will not sustain a State. Wealth is essential. It must not, however, be wealth simply, but wealth plus patriotism. It is by the mingling of the material with the ideal, the aspiring with the utilitarian, that the British people have secured their influence and elasticity.

"These qualities have enabled them to dot the surface of the globe with their possessions, to rule with success old nations of every race and creed, and civilize new lands of every kind and clime."

THE QUEEN'S YACHTS.

The Estimates of the year carry the charges for the Queen's yacht launched in January after earlier disaster. This brings the

Queen's private "navee" up to five ships, for their tonnage and speed certainly the costliest fleet in the world. The Queen's first yacht, now reduced to the status of a tender, was built more than fifty years ago. She cost, to begin with, over £6,000. That does not seem much; but it was only to begin with. Some years ago, when the question was discussed in Committee of the House of Commons, it was stated that, taking into account repairs alone, not mentioning maintenance, the little *Elfin* had cost £500 a ton. Effective contrast was made by quotation of analogous expenditure upon one of the stateliest ironclads of the day. It was shown that after an equal term of public service in all seas the man-of-war had cost but £80 a ton.

DIES IRÆ.

Next in point of age comes the *Victoria and Albert*, built at Pembroke in 1855. Her original cost was £176,820. Again, apart from wages of the crew and supply of stores, she has, on the average, cost the nation £12,000 a year, which starts her, including original cost, well on the way to three-quarters of a million sterling. Third in seniority is the *Alberta*, built in 1863, followed by the *Osborne*, a fine ship of 1,850 tons. She cost £134,000, and expenditure upon her in the way of repairs and decorations is estimated at £8,000 a year—nearly as much as the Lord Chancellor costs.

DIES IRÆ.

Mr. Asquith was Secretary of State for the Home Department for a period of three years. It is, I believe, one of his most pleasant reminiscences that, dealing with successive cases, he took off an aggregate period of forty years' penal servitude allotted to prisoners by a single judge. Among friends and personal acquaintances the judge in question is known as a simple-mannered, kind-hearted man, brimming over with humour and loving-kindness. On the Bench, translated by the covering of wig and gown, he is pitiless.

I hear on unquestioned authority a striking illustration of this paradox. Frequently after having passed one of those sentences that call forth strong remonstrance in the Press, his lordship has been known privately to visit the convict, conversing with him or her in the most beautiful, brotherly manner, displaying the keenest interest in the spiritual opportunities of the prisoner.

That is nice and kind. On the whole, it may be presumed that the convict would prefer the conversation to have taken another turn on the Bench, reducing a term of penal servitude by from three to five years.

"HEY HO! AND A BOTTLE OF RUM."

To the casual observer Sir Grant Duff has neither the air nor the manner of a *raconteur*. The publication of his diary proves afresh how untrustworthy are appearances. His volumes—and we are only at the beginning of an illimitable series—are full of good things. I once heard him tell a story I do not find in his diary. He claimed for it the mark of respectability, as it is founded upon fact. During the First Napoleon's campaign in Egypt a Rear-

"THE ADMIRAL'S RUM."

Admiral attached to the British Fleet, watching the General's operations, died at sea. With his last breath he expressed the wish that his body might be sent home for burial. Considering the appliances at command of the doctors that seemed an injunction impossible to obey. To someone occurred the happy thought that if the body were inclosed in a vessel containing spirits it might be safely transported.

The late Admiral was accordingly nailed up in a hogshead of rum, which was transhipped to a frigate going home with despatches. On arrival of the ship at Portsmouth the cask was broached, and with the exception of the corpse it was found to be empty.

Some of the crew, scenting rum and knowing of nothing else, brought a gimlet into play and, subtly inserting straws in the aperture, drank the Admiral dry.

A MATTER OF COURSE.

This suggested to Sir Wilfrid Lawson, seated at the same dinner table, another story. It is located in Westmorland, and must be true because Sir Wilfrid lives in the adjoining county. Two neighbours were talking over the recent death of a farmer slightly known to both.

"Did he die of drink?" asked one.

"Well," said the other, "I never heard to the contrary."

PROMPTING MAJESTY.

In the Memoirs of a Foreign Minister accredited to the Court of Charles II. I find the following graphic description of the ceremony of the opening of Parliament. Those familiar with what takes place on the rare, now finally discontinued, appearances of the Sovereign at Westminster will perceive how closely precedent is preserved even to the incident of the rush of members to the House of Commons propelling the Speaker and the Mace to the Bar of the House of Lords:—

"The King of England performed yesterday the opening of Parliament in the Upper House. He was adorned with the Royal cloak and wore his crown; he was surrounded by his great officers of State; he took his seat; the lords and bishops did the same, and then he ordered the members of the Lower House to be called. They rushed tumultuously *(tumultuairement)* into the Upper House, as the mob does in the hall of audience at the Paris Parliament, when the ushers have been called. They remained on the other side of a barrier which closes the pit where the Lords sit, their Speaker standing in the middle.

"The King of England then began his harangue. This harangue lasted nearly a quarter of an hour, and was very well delivered by the King, near whom I happened to be, and was translated to me by Milord Beleze (Bellasys). One thing I did not like: he had it all ready written in his hand, and very often looked at his paper, almost as if he had read it. I was informed that such was the custom in England, the reason being that the King may not expose himself to the laughter of the people by stopping short through loss of memory. Preachers in the pulpit do the same. If the Chancellor, whom his gout prevented from being present, had been able to perform his duty, the King would have been prompted by him from behind."

LORD HALSBURY AS PROMPTER.

The fancy lingers fondly over our Lord Halsbury in the prompter's box with "the book" of the Queen's Speech in his hand. That I must leave to the imagination of F. C. G.

The Blue Mountain.

A Story for Children. By E. Nesbit.

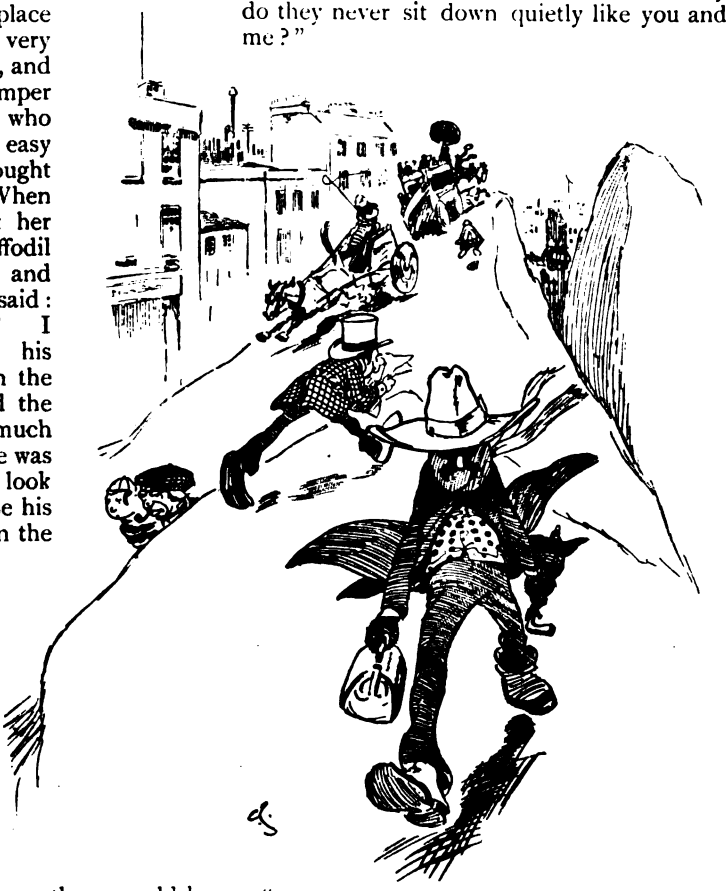
TONY was young Tony, and old Tony was his grandfather. This story is about young Tony, and no human being believes a word of it, unless young Tony does.

Tony was born in the town of Antioch. This is not the same Antioch that you read about in history, but quite a different place. It was a place where nearly everyone was very dark as to the complexion, and rather short as to the temper and the figure. People who were fair in the face and easy in the temper were not thought much of in Antioch. When Tony's mother saw that her baby was as fair as a daffodil and as good as gold and laughed all day long, she said: "Oh, dear, oh, dear! I suppose he takes after his grandfather. He's not in the least like *my* family," and the matter annoyed her so much that she died. Then there was only old Tony left to look after young Tony, because his father had been killed in the wars only a few weeks before.

The people of Antioch were always fighting the neighbouring tribes -- red-faced savages who deserved no better fate than to be killed; only, of course, sometimes a few Antiochians had to be killed too, because that is part of the game, and if there were no danger there would be no glory, would there?

Little Tony's hair remained yellow, and his habit of laughing grew with his years. He learned his lessons and he learned his play. He was excellent company, and if it had not been for the yellowness of his hair and the gentleness of his nature he would have been quite popular among his schoolmates. His grandfather called him gentle; but the people of Antioch called him lazy, for they, as I said, were very black and generally angry. They hurried up and down in their rocky little city, and always they seemed to be driven by most urgent affairs, hurrying to keep important appointments. They ran about all day long attending to their business, and hardly stopping for their dinner or their tea, and no one ever saw any of them asleep.

"Why is it, grandfather?" young Tony asked one day. "What is it all about? Why do they never sit down quietly like you and me?"



"THEY HURRIED UP AND DOWN IN THEIR ROCKY LITTLE CITY."

"It's the great heart of the nation, my boy," said old Tony; "it can't be still—it's in the breed, you know—they can't help it—they're all alike, too—except you and me. Why, bless your heart, look at the King, now. He's more in a hurry than all the rest—and more—more noble and active, bless him!"

The old man ended his speech in quite a different voice from the one he had begun with. This was because he suddenly caught

the glitter of the King's crown as the monarch peeped round the corner. The King of Antioch was always in a hurry—always running somewhere or other; consequently, he was seldom on his throne, and his loyal subjects had to look out very sharply, for he was always sure to be where they least expected him. You may think that they could have got over this little difficulty by always looking for the King where they least expected him; but if you try this simple experiment for yourself, with your governess or tutor, or even your nurse, I think you will find that it is not so easy as it looks.

"Ha!" said the King, standing in the doorway and laughing cheerfully, "talking treason, eh? Well, you know what the punishment for *that* is? Pinching with black pincers, you know, till—well, till you don't feel the pinching any more."

"Ha, ha! Your Majesty has always such a pleasant way with you," said old Tony, politely, and young Tony decided that when he grew up he would try not to have any pleasant ways at all.

The King rustled quickly round the little house and looked at everything—dresser, chairs, plates, and pots. He was sorry that there was nothing he could find fault with, so he said: "Beware of luxury," and hurried off to make his presence felt in some other humble home. There was no pride about King Anthony the Twenty-third. He just dropped in, without an invitation, and took his subjects as he found them.

"King Anthony the Twenty-third is the noblest of monarchs," said old Tony, as he and his grandson sat down to their plain supper.

"It's all right, grandfather, he's quite gone—he's not listening—for a wonder," said young Tony.

Meantime the King was hurrying in and out and up and down the crowded streets of his city, picking up little bits of information, and making his subjects feel that his Kingship was not a mere matter of form, but that he was really interested in the most humble life among his people. It was a strange town, all up hill and down hill, with shelving rocks and precipices all mixed up with the public streets. The people, for all their busy habits, had no trade; or, rather, they did not manufacture anything. They built houses and brought up their families; they wrapped their children up very snugly and carried them about at a much earlier age than we consider safe; and they milked their cows, which were large and green, and had wings, and they drank the milk, and they gathered the fruit of the trees that grew on the plain below the town, and they got on very well indeed. There was only one drawback to life in Antioch, and that was its uncertainty. At any moment an earthquake might occur: then down would go half the town, and the busy citizens had it all to build again. They soon did it, for they were nothing if not industrious. A much more awful thing was the storm of hot rain that now and then fell on the town—a blighting rain that killed all it touched. This was more dreaded than even the earthquakes, but, fortunately, it very seldom happened.

Old Tony was beadle and sexton and keeper of the town records—and very nicely he kept them, too. There was not a speck of dirt on one of them. He used to spend hours and hours polishing the records, and he scoured the tombstones till they shone again, and he had most of the inscriptions by heart. After an earthquake he was always most careful to put the tombstones back in their proper places, and one day when he was doing this he came upon a stone he did not remember to have seen before. He called to young Tony, who had had a Board School education, to see if he could read the bits of words that were carved upon it.

"It seems like a foreign language," said he.

"I can't make it out," said young Tony; "it's not carved; it's in the stone somehow; looks as if it was coming through from the other side." He turned the stone over, and there on the other side was an inscription which both of them had read a hundred times:—

HERE LIES HENRY BIRKBECK,
MAGICIAN TO THE INSTITUTE.

However humble he seems to you,
His last foretelling is going to come true.

P.S.—You see if it doesn't.

"Dear me," said old Tony, "poor old Henry Birkbeck! It seems like yesterday. Yes—he was very respectable—but only in a small way of business. A magician he was by trade, but no one thought much of him, except, perhaps, the King, and *he* never gave him a lift. He used to do things with eggs and a hat—but he broke the eggs as often as not; and the gold-fish and handkerchief he hardly ever brought off."

Old Tony began to lay down the tombstone—but young Tony held it up with one hand and tried to scrape the back of it with the other.

"There *is* something here," he said: "let's set it upright, instead of laying it down, and I'll scrub it and see what the letters are. Poor old Mr. Birkbeck! I wonder what his last foretelling was. Was he good at prophesying, grandfather?"

"Not a bit," said the sexton. "And, to do him justice, he almost gave it up in his later years. You see, people laughed at him so, because the things he foretold never happened. Towards the end he grew very feeble—hardly prophesied a single prophecy from one year's end to another. Sometimes he would say: 'I shouldn't wonder if it rained before Sunday,' but then he never wondered at anything. He was a calm old man, was poor Henry—it took a good deal to astonish him."

Young Tony tried to interest his boy friends in the back of poor old Henry Birkbeck's tombstone, but nobody cared. They were all in too much of a hurry to care for an occupation so slow as cleaning tombstones. But Tony worked away perseveringly; he cleaned it with soap and he cleaned it with soda; with brick-dust and vinegar, with rotten-stone and wash-leather; with patience and elbow grease; and, as you know, the last two will clean almost anything. So, after a time, a few letters began to show distinctly here and there, and presently Tony found he could read whole words. There was "milk," and "mountains," and a word that looked like "Jilk," only, of course, it couldn't be that. And the last word of all was "reign," and the second word of all was "Tony."

"It must be something to do with *me*," said young Tony, "because of my name being in it."

"It must have something to do with the King," said old Tony, "because it says reign; so you'd better cut off to the palace, and look sharp about it, or His Majesty will know the reason why."

So Tony looked sharp about it, and got to the palace in less than five minutes. For a wonder, the King was not engaged in dropping in on his subjects, but was on his throne amid his fussy black courtiers, who were all busy trying to make themselves as small as they could.

This was because the King was very short; though he did not like to think so. He always had himself described in the census and the police reports as a "powerful man of middle height," though he was nowhere near the middle height and no more powerful than other people.

"Well, boy," said King Anthony the Twenty-third, "what have you come here for?"

"There's a prophecy," said Tony.

"There are a good many," said King Anthony, "but they don't amount to much since poor Henry Birkbeck died. He was something like a prophet," he went on, turning to his courtiers. "He foretold, when I was only a baby, that if I grew up I should perhaps be King. The late King, my father, was very pleased, I remember."

The courtiers all bowed, and said it was really wonderful. Tony said:—

"Well, then, you'd better come and have a look at this prophecy, because it's the late Mr. Birkbeck's last one—and he said it's going to come true."

"OFF THEY ALL WENT."

"Bring it here, can't you?" said the King.

"No, I can't," said the boy; "it's on his tombstone, so there. I can't carry tombstones about."

"No," said the King, thoughtfully; "of course, you're not powerfully built—you're nowhere near the medium height."

"Come and look at it, if you want to," said Tony. "I'm in no hurry."

"Well," said King Anthony, "I don't care if I do. I'm tired of sitting still."

So off they all went, King, Court, heralds, men-at-arms, banner-bearers, and spearmen, down the narrow, dark, crooked town streets till they came to the churchyard where the tombstones were—both the upright and the flat kind.

Tony ran on ahead, and knelt in front of the tombstone. Then he jumped up and called out:—

"Hi! You hurry up: it's as plain now as the nose on your face."

"You should say, 'the Royal nose on your Majesty's Royal face,'" said old Tony, anxiously.

But the King was too much interested to care about even his subjects' manners just then.

He came up to the tombstone, and on it he read, and Tony read, and all the courtiers read:—

When Tony drinks the
Blue Mountain's milk
He shall wear a Sunday
suit of silk.
He shall be tallest in
all the land
And hold the town
under his command.
He shall have greatness
and we shall have
grain.
Soon may it happen,
and long may he
reign.

Hurrah.

H. BIRKBECK.

The King read this and said, "Well, I never."

And all the courtiers said the same.

"Tony means Me," said the King.

The courtiers said that of course it did.

"I am King Tony the Twenty-third," said he.

And the courtiers said of course he was. They all spoke at once, like a chorus.

"I was christened Anthony, of course," his restless Majesty went on, fidgeting with his gold collar, "but I know that my subjects have always spoken of me behind my back by the endearing diminutive."

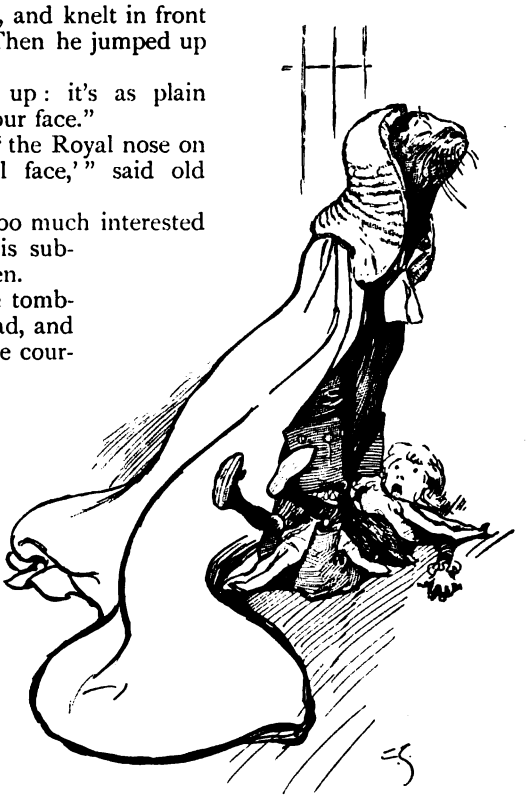
The courtiers assured the King that this was so.

"I suppose there's no one else called Tony?" The King turned a threatening glance on the crowd, and everyone hastened to say no, there wasn't.

But old Tony turned extremely pale, and hurrying into the vestry he tampered with the register of births, and altered his own name to Sidney Cecil Ernest Watchett.

But young Tony spoke up. "*My* name's Tony," said he.

"Oh, is it?" said His Majesty. "We'll soon see about that. Guards, seize him. Now, what's your name?"



"TONY WAS STAMPED ON BY THE GREAT SEAL."

"Tony," said he.

"Your name is not Tony," said the King. "Your name is——" he could not think of a name at the moment, so he stopped. Tony said:—

"My name is Tony."

"Take him to the Parliament House," said the King, beside himself with rage. "Give him a taste of the Mace." And Tony tasted the Mace, and was stamped on by the Great Seal, who was very fierce and lived in a cage at the Parliament House, until he was stiff and sore and sorry enough to be glad to say that his name was anything the King liked except Tony, which, of course, it never, never could have been. He admitted at last that his name was William Waterbury Watchett, and was discharged with a caution, in old Tony's care.

"But my name *is* Tony after all," he said to himself, as he went home full of sad memories of the Mace and the Great Seal. "I wonder where the Blue Mountain is?"

Young Tony thought a good deal about

poor Henry Birkbeck's prophecy—perhaps the Great Seal had stamped it on his memory. Anyway, he could not forget it, and all the next day he wandered about on the steep edge of the town, looking out over the landscape below.

It was not an interesting landscape. All round the brown hill where the town was lay the vast forests of green trees, something like bamboos, whose fruit the people ate, and beyond that one could see the beginnings of a still larger forest, where none of the people of Antioch had ever dared to go — the forest whose leaves were a hundred times as big as the King himself, and the trunks of the trees as big as whole countries. Above all was the blue sky, but, look as Tony would, he could see no Blue Mountain. Then suddenly he saw the largest forest shake and shiver, its enormous leaves swaying this way and that.

"It must be an earthquake," said Tony, trembling. But he did not run away. And his valour was rewarded, as valour deserves to be. The next moment the vast branches of the enormous forest parted — and a giant figure came out into the forest of bamboo-like trees. It was a figure more gigantic than Tony had ever imagined possible. It had long, yellow hair. In its hands it carried a great white bowl, big enough to float a navy in. If such an expression did not sound rather silly, I should say that this figure gave Tony the idea of a little-girl-giant.

It sat down among the bamboo forest, crushing millions of trees as it sat; and with a spoon twice the length of the King's Banqueting Hall it began to eat out of the tremendous basin. Tony saw great lumps, like blocks of soft marble, balanced on the vast spoon—and he knew that the giant-little-girl was eating giant bread and milk. And she wore a giant frock—and the frock was blue. Then Tony understood. This was the "Blue Mountain" — and in that big, big sea of a basin there was milk, "the Blue Mountain's milk."

"A LITTLE-GIRL-GIANT."

Tony stood still a moment and then turned and ran as hard as he could, straight into the Royal presence. To be more exact, he ran into the Royal waistcoat, for the King, in a hurry as usual, was coming out of his palace gates with a rush.

The King was extremely annoyed. He refused to listen to a word Tony had to say until Parliament had been called together, and had passed a Bill strengthening the enactments against Cheek.

Then he allowed Tony to tell his tale. And when the tale was told everyone ran to the battlements of the town to look.

There was no Blue Mountain to be seen.

Then His Majesty told Tony what he

thought of him, and it was not pleasant hearing.

"I'm *not* a liar," said Tony, "and I'm very sorry I told you anything about it. I might jolly well have gone and got it for myself. *My* name's—er—William Waterbury Watchett." He stopped in confusion.

"I should think it was," said the King. "If there *is* any mountain, which I don't for a moment believe, you'd better go and fetch me some of the milk—not that I think there is any—out of the mountain's basin, which I cannot believe exists outside your . . . . imagination. If you bring it to this address you will be suitably rewarded."

"All right," said Tony; "shall I fetch it in a jug or will they lend me a can?"

"I will lend you my mug," said the King, "and mind you bring it back safe."

So Tony took the mug—it had "For a good little King. A present from Antwerp" on it—and kissed his grandfather, and started off on his long and perilous journey.

"I suppose he'll give me a reward if I get it," he thought; "and if not, well, it's an adventure any way."

He passed through the crowded streets, where everyone was hurrying about in the usual frantic haste, and out at the town gates, and down the road into the forest. In due time he reached the spot where the Blue Mountain had sat down to eat its unimaginably enormous breakfast. But there was no mountain to be seen, and Tony knew that he could do nothing but sit down and wait, in the hope that the Blue Mountain would come next morning to eat its breakfast in the same place.

So he looked about for a place to rest safely in, and presently found just what he wanted—a little cave whose walls and roof were of dried earth, and there he stayed all that day and night, eating the fruit of the fallen trees.

And next morning there was a rustling and a swaying of the trees, and the Blue Mountain came striding over the tall tree-tops, bending down the forest as she came, on colossal black legs, and massive shoes with monstrous ankle straps—and each shoe was big enough to have crushed a thousand Tonys at one step.

So he hid in his cave, and presently knew by the shaking of the ground, like an earthquake, that the mountain had sat down.

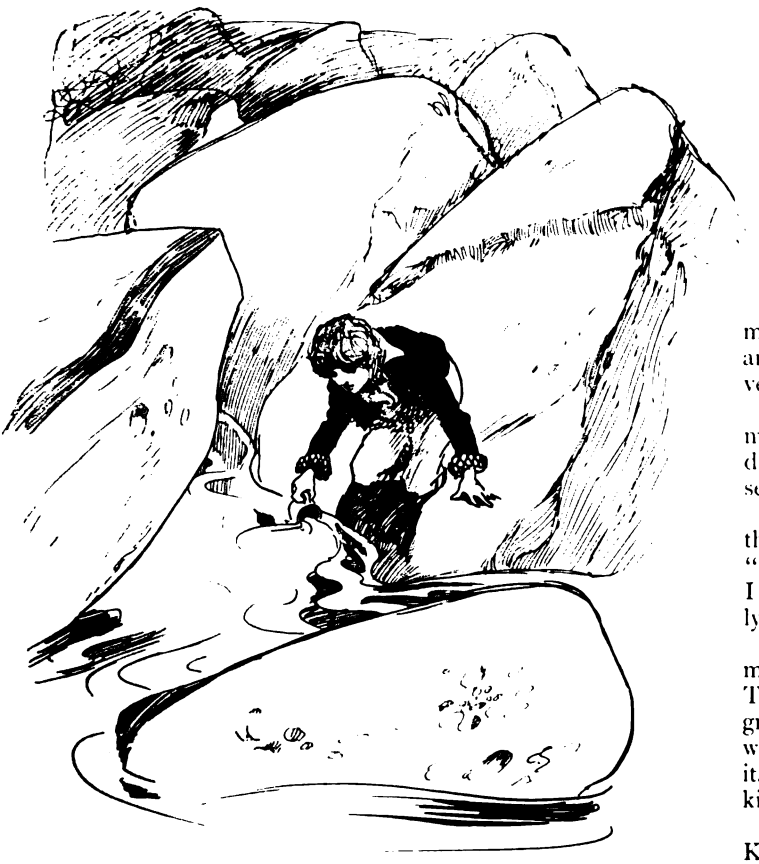
Then he came out. He was too near to see the mountain properly, but he saw a great blue fold of giant frock near him, and far above him towered the blue heights of the giant-little-girl's knees. On the summit of these shone a vast white round—the great bread and milk basin.

Tony started to climb the blue fold. It was stiff, starched with giant starch, I suppose, and it bore his weight easily. But it was a long climb, and he drew a deep breath of thankfulness when he reached the broad table-land of the giant-little-girl's knees. And now the smooth, shiny roundness of the big basin was before him; he tried its polished surface again and again, and always fell back baffled. Then he saw that he might climb up the sleeve of the gigantic arm whose hand held the basin. With his heart in his mouth he began the ascent, slowly and carefully, holding the precious mug closely to his breast. His breath came faster and faster as he went up and up, and at last stood triumphantly on the edge of the great blue sleeve. From there to the edge of the basin it was easy to crawl. And now at last he stood on the giddy verge of the monstrous basin, and looked down at the lake of milk with the rocks of bread in it, many, many feet below. The great height made him giddy; he lost his footing, and, still clasping the mug, he fell headlong into the giant bread and milk. The bread-rocks were fortunately soft. Tony picked himself up. He was wet—but no bones were broken; and the mug—oh, joy—the mug was safe! Tony looked it over anxiously as he sat on a rock of bread—a sloppy and uncertain resting-place: there was only one small crack near the handle, and Tony was almost sure that had been there before.

"I don't know how ever I shall get out again," said Tony; "perhaps I never shall, but in case I do I suppose I had better fill the mug." So he stooped from the rock and filled the mug from the lake of milk, which was quite different from the milk of the green cows with wings, the only kind of milk Tony was used to. He had just filled the mug, and tied it down with a piece of parchment which he had taken from the town records and brought with him for the purpose, when a noise like thunder suddenly broke on his ear—indeed, it very nearly broke the ear itself—and so startled Tony that the precious mug all but slipped from his grasp.

Then a wave of milk swept up almost over his bread-rock. The whole of the massive basin was moving sideways. Then came a shock like an earthquake—the basin was being set on the ground.

Tony felt that the Blue Mountain had



"HE STOOPED FROM THE ROCK AND FILLED THE MUG."

seen him. What would the giant-little-girl do? Would she kill him? If so, how? These questions afforded Tony food for some interesting reflections for the next few moments.

He looked round him for a way of escape. Everywhere towered the smooth, white, sloping walls. The tremendous spoon which he had seen the Blue Mountain use had unfortunately not been left in the basin, or he could have climbed out by that. He gave himself up for lost.

Then, suddenly, he saw the trunk of a slender tree appear at the edge of the basin. It was pushed down towards him, yes, on to the very bread-rock on which he crouched. Would it crush him? No: the end of it rested on the rock by his side: it gently moved towards him. He saw now that the Blue Mountain was not cruel — she was not bent on destroying him. She was offering him a way of escape. He eagerly climbed the tree. When he was half-way up, however, the giant-little-girl flung the tree aside, and, with Tony still clinging to it, it fell crashing into the forest. When he came to himself he almost shouted for joy to find the mug still whole.

He never knew how he got home.

When he took the mug to the King the monarch looked at it, and said, "The milk's very queer."

"It's giant cow's milk," said Tony. "You drink it up, and let's see what happens."

"I don't know," said the King, suspiciously; "suppose it's poisoned? I shall have it analyzed."

"Well, you promised me a reward," said Tony, "and you wouldn't grudge it if you knew what a time I've had of it. I might have been killed, you know."

"*Reward!*" said the King, who had been looking at the mug. "REWARD? When you've cracked my mug—my own only mug with 'A Present for a good King' on it? Reward indeed! A stamp from the Great Seal would be more——"

But Tony was gone. He ran home to tell his grandfather, but his grandfather was not there, only a letter lay on the kitchen table.

"DEAR GRANDSON," it said; "the King has found out that my name was entered in the register as Anthony Antrobus, and he refuses to believe that the alteration to Sidney Cecil Ernest Watchett was made at my birth. So I am seeking safety at a distance. I have only one piece of advice to give you. *Do so too.*—Your loving

"GRANDFATHER."

This seemed such good advice to Tony (whose name was also in the register) that he was just going to take it when the door was flung open and in rushed the King and the army. They hustled and bustled and rustled round the house, breaking and tearing everything, and when there was nothing more to spoil they carried Tony off to prison.

"So this is my reward for getting the milk for him," said poor Tony to himself as he sat in prison, loaded with chains and waiting for his trial. "I wish I'd drunk the milk myself. This is what comes of loyalty. But I don't care! *My* name's Tony and his *isn't:* and I'll say so too—if I hang for it."

Acting on this resolution, next day at his trial Tony *did* say so, and what is more, he came very near indeed to hanging for it, for King Anthony the Twenty-third was furious. He absolutely danced with rage, and it took six Prime Ministers to restrain his emotion while the trial went on.

Tony was tried for an attempt to murder the King. The whole thing, said the Public Persecutor, was nothing but a plot. The prophecy of Henry Birkbeck—which nobody had seen till Tony found it; the Blue Mountain—which nobody but Tony had seen at all; the strange milk, so mysteriously obtained—all pointed to dark treason and villainy. The crack in the mug was a peculiarly incriminating circumstance (I can't help the long words—Public Persecutors *will* use them). It was a vile plot, the Persecutor said—but it had failed. The Public Analyst gave evidence that the milk was not milk at all, but some explosive substance too dangerous to analyze.

Tony looked at the jury, and he looked round the court, and he saw that the case did indeed look black against him. When he was asked what was his defence, he said:—

"There's no pleasing some people."

"It is my duty to caution you," said the Persecutor, "that everything you say will be used against you."

"I daresay it will," said Tony, wearily; "but I can't help that. Everything I *do* is used against me too. I needn't have told anyone anything about it—I might have got the milk myself, and been King. But I got it for *him*, and I didn't crack the mug: at least, I'm almost sure not. I only wish I *had* drunk the milk."

"Make him drink it now," shouted a thousand voices from the crowded court.

"TONY WAS TRIED FOR AN ATTEMPT TO MURDER THE KING."

"Don't," said the King, hastily; "it might not be poison after all."

"You can't have it both ways, your Majesty," said the Persecutor, bravely. "Either it is poison—in which case the prisoner deserves to drink it; or it's not poison—in which case the prisoner leaves the court without a stain upon his character."

"It is poison!"

"It isn't!"

"It is!"

"It isn't!"

The shouts rose louder and louder.

"It's not poison, it's milk," cried Tony, and suddenly seizing the mug of milk, which had been brought into the court to give its evidence, he lifted it to his lips, and before the gaoler could prevent it, he drained the

milk to the last drop and ran out of the court, for everyone was too astonished to stop him. The moment he was outside he felt a sudden and awful change in himself. He was growing, growing, growing! He hurried out of the town. He felt that it would soon be too small to hold him. Outside he got bigger and bigger, till the trees of the nearer forest were like grass under his feet, and the mug ran out of his hand like a little grain of rape-seed.

And there beside him stood the Mountain—a little girl in a blue dress—and he was taller than she was.

"Halloa," said the Blue Mountain, "where did you spring from?"

"From the town down there," said Tony.

"There?" said the Mountain, stooping. "That's not a town, silly! You know it's only an ant-hill, really."

"It's my town," said Tony, "and its name is Antioch, and——"

And then he told her the whole story. In the middle of it she sat down, to listen better, crushing millions of trees as she sat. And Tony sat down, crushing other millions. But now it only seemed to him that he had sat down on the grass. It makes a great deal of difference what size you are.

"HE WAS GROWING, GROWING, GROWING!"

"And that's where I used to live," said Tony, pointing to the town, "and my name is Tony."

"I know *that*," said the Blue Mountain; "but you live next door to us, you know you do. You always did, and that's only an ant-hill."

And when Tony looked down again it seemed to him that perhaps it really *was* only an ant-hill.

All the same he knew the King when he saw him hurrying along the ramparts, and he picked the King up and put him on a cow's ear, and the cow scratched its ear with its hind foot, and that was the end of the King.

"Don't tease the ants," said the Blue Mountain. "People pour boiling water sometimes, or dig up the heaps, but *I* think it's cruel."

Tony remembered the hot rain and the earthquakes.

"It's a nice story," she said. "Of course the grass *is* like a forest to the ants, and the big forest's the hedge, and your Sunday suit *is* silk velvet. Your aunt told mother so. Yes, it's a nice story. And an ant *did* drop into my bread and milk yesterday, though I don't know how you knew."

"*You* mayn't believe it," said Tony. "I shall give them corn, because it says so in Mr. Birkbeck's prophecy; but I won't ever give them any milk in case they grow big. They're too bad-tempered. Just think, if the King had been *our* size!"

"Oh, come along home, do," said the Blue Mountain, a little crossly. "I'm tired, and it's dinner-time. It's no use pretending about Kings and things. You know well enough you're only Tony-next-door."

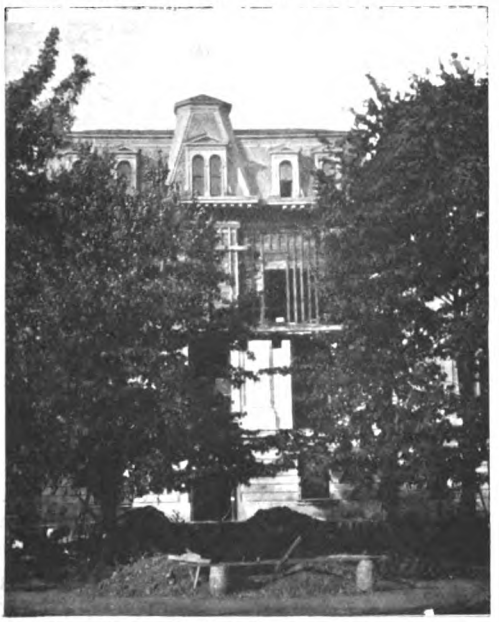
And, whatever he may have been before, it is quite certain that since then he has been Tony-next-door, and nothing else whatever.

*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

HOW TO BEAT A HOODOO.

This is a house that is being built in the city of Washington, D.C., for the purpose of beating a hoodoo. It is the property of Mrs. R. H. Townsend, a daughter of Colonel "Tom" Scott, of Pennsylvania Railroad fame. A number of years ago the lady consulted a witch, who told her that if ever she



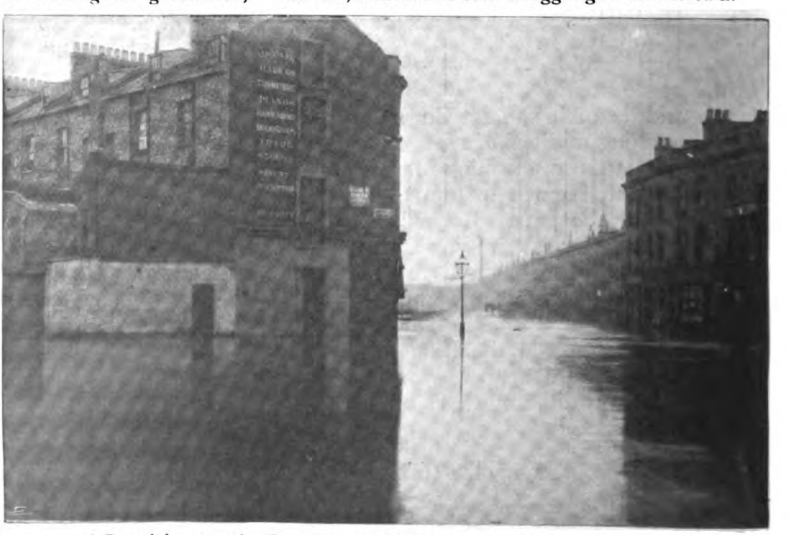
lived in a house which had not been occupied previously she would die within six months. To escape the fulfilment of this prophecy Mrs. Townsend bought a large mansion, formerly belonging to Judge Hillyer, and, having reduced it to a skeleton, is constructing the new house around it. The roof and framework of the old dwelling being retained, she will actually occupy the old house, though the latter is converted into a new one to all intents and purposes. Great wings and back buildings are being added, so that it will be the largest mansion in Washington. The retention of the framework of the old structure, far from saving anything, is actually an expense, and has seriously hampered the architects. Yet Mrs. Townsend will sleep beneath an old roof, and the alterations will come under the head of improvements, technically speaking. This photo. was taken by Miss Violet Biddle, 1,823, Q Street, Washington, D.C.

A REAL MORNING "TUB."

"I send you a photograph of myself taken by a friend of mine at a mining camp in Canada," writes Mr. T. C. Scott, of Lavenham, Suffolk. "Mining camps, as a rule, are not fitted up with luxurious bathrooms, and this picture shows how I used to overcome the difficulties of a hot bath."

HOW A SWEEP WAS SWEPT AWAY.

Mr. G. Guy, of Reservoir Cottage, Dartmouth Park Hill, N.W., sends a photo. which graphically shows the extent of a flood of the New River Company's mains. The depth of water was considerable, so much so in fact, that horses actually made attempts to swim the swift-flowing current, the school children had to be brought home in carts, and a sweep who attempted to cross the street was literally swept off his feet, and can be seen struggling in mid-stream.



* Copyright, 1900, by Geo. Newnes, Limited.

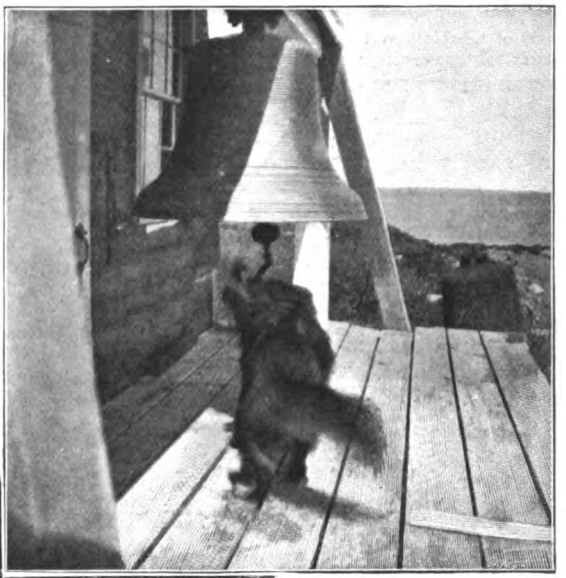
A TRAP-DOOR SPIDER.

Mr. Wann Gays, of 206, Maria Street, Ottawa, sends two most interesting photos. of the trap-door leading to a spider's underground tunnel. The top picture shows the trap-door thrown back on its hinge, leaving a free passage for "the occupier"; the picture below shows the same trap-door thrown back into its place. For fuller particulars of these fascinating underground passages and trap-doors we would particularly recall to the minds of our readers an article on the subject which

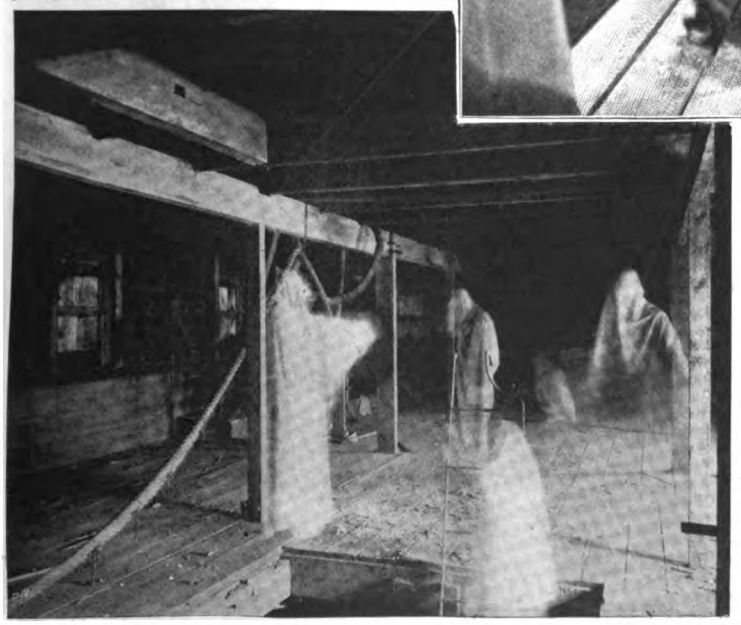
was contributed by the late Mr. Grant Allen to our issue for December, 1898. Photo. by J. B. Readman.

A KNOWING DOG.

Mr. Joseph W. Smith, Jun., of Andover, Mass., in sending the photo. that follows, says: "The blurred mass of fur seen in the accompanying photograph represents a shepherd's dog at Wood Island, Maine, ringing the fog-bell with a rope held between his teeth. When 'Sailor,' for that is what he is called, sees a vessel passing the lighthouse he runs to the bell, and with a quick, sharp bark seizes the short rope between his teeth and rings several times. When I visited the beacon last summer I had my camera with me, and managed to catch him in this extraordinary attitude. So quickly did the animal shake the rope that only a blur is seen where the dog ought to be.



'Sailor' keeps on land what might be termed a 'dog watch' at sea."



WHERE GHOSTS DO WALK.

This very striking, not to say awe-inspiring, picture is that of a huge, gloomy sail-loft on the shore of Long Island. The ghosts and the operator were all one and the same person. The plate was exposed for 20min., which gave the operator time to place himself in one position after another, remaining long enough in each place for the white draperies to make an impression upon the plate. Mr. H. F. Perkins, of Levering Hall, J. H. U., Baltimore, sends this unique contribution.

"SANCTUARY" IN A SHIP'S RIGGING.

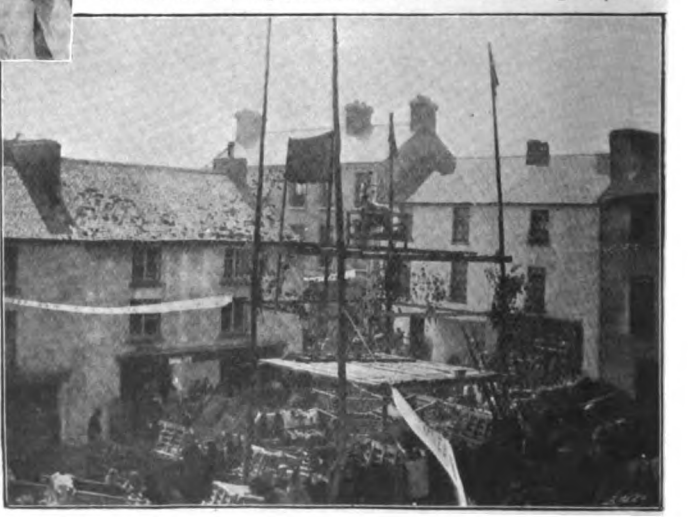
An amusing scene occurred not so very long ago on Wexford Quay. A certain gentleman had been sentenced at Bride Street to one month's imprisonment for a minor offence. He managed, however, to go abroad for some time. On his return to Wexford he met two policemen on the quay, and took to his heels. The policemen did the same thing, and a pretty hot chase resulted. Very hard pressed, the fugitive ran aboard a schooner, quickly followed by the police-constables. Almost at bay now, a bright idea struck the runaway, who wriggled up the rigging like a monkey. From his elevated height he defied his captors — for a time. He was photographed during his stay aloft, with the amusing result shown here. Mr. W. H. Thompson, of the Custom House Quay, Wexford, sends this interesting photo.

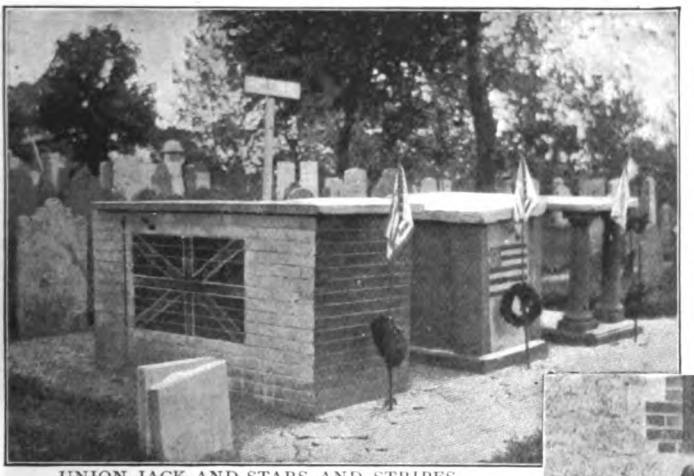
A BORDER BRIDE'S HAT.

Some time ago we reproduced the photo. of a Hawick bride's jacket as decorated for the wedding party by her comrade factory girls. We now give the reproduction of a bride's hat. The jacket and hat are usually stolen from the prospective bride. The girls secretly adorn the garments with small toys, dolls, etc., and when finished they are a blaze of gorgeous colours. The hat here shown was originally a plain black sailor hat, and all the feathers, bells, etc., had to be sewn on by the tricky mill-girls. The long ribbons are made of paper, as also are the roses. The photo. is also unique, as the photographer, to do justice to the hat, utilized a plaster cast of the poet Burns as a hat-rack! The total result nearly resembles the gaudy outfit of some Red Indian squaw, and represents the Scottish poet in a new light. The photo., taken by Richard Bell, Hawick, is sent in by Mr. John G. Galbraith, 300, Cumberland Street, Glasgow, and the hat is now the property of Mrs. Galbraith.

THE BILLY-GOAT OF PUCK FAIR.

Puck Fair, one of the largest fairs in Munster, is an annual fair held in Killorglin, about ten miles from Killarney. Connected with it is a most peculiar circumstance, namely, the presence of a large Puck goat, elevated on a platform some 40ft. high, in the most conspicuous part of the town. Hence the name of the fair. The origin of this custom, founded on fact, dates from the middle of the eighteenth century. The story is this: Some persons wished to start a fair in opposition to a neighbouring one; the start was apparently a very bad one, as the only animal presented for sale was a Billy-goat. The committee, nothing daunted, bought the animal, and, at the suggestion of some sage in their midst, held him over till the anniversary, when they placed him in a position similar to that which his worthy and venerable successor holds in the photograph. The fame of the fair became widespread owing chiefly to this circumstance. Hence its present prominent position among the Munster fairs. We are not surprised, therefore, to find that year by year the largest Puck available on the Reeks is borne in triumph and made monarch of all he surveys during the three days. Mr. P. J. Sears, of All Hallows' College, Dublin, sends this entertaining snap-shot.



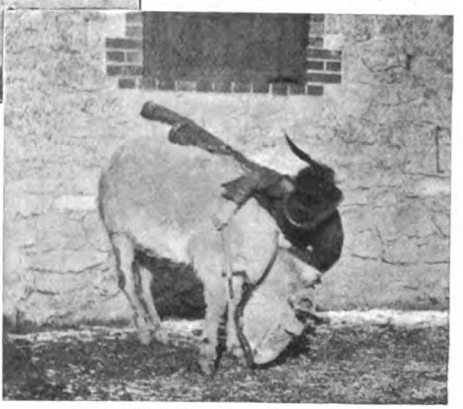


UNION JACK AND STARS AND STRIPES.

During the war of 1812–15 between the United States and England the American ship *Enterprise* captured the British ship *Boxer* near Portland, Maine. Both the captains were killed, and were buried side by side in the cemetery at Portland. The custodian of the cemetery has painted flags on each of the tombs, and the Portland Camp of the Grand Army which annually decorates soldiers' and sailors' graves has decorated them both alike. The grave of the English captain is in the foreground, and shows the Union Jack quite plainly. Mr. E. R. Jump, 21, Yarmouth Street, Boston, Mass., sends this photo.

ART IN THE HOME!

The extraordinary interior shown in this picture is that of the sitting-room in the home of an eccentric lady living near Canterbury, New Hampshire. The lady, Mrs. Monmouth, lives entirely alone, and the whole interior decoration is the work of her own hands. The *portières* are made of two thicknesses of mosquito netting, with figures cut out of wall-paper and pasted between. The carpet on the floor she braided, introducing Scriptural and other texts as she manufactured it. The wreath of flowers is made of different coloured worsteds, and shows a great deal of painstaking in the making. The flowers are mostly of the aster variety, and imitate Nature as closely as the colours of the worsteds will permit. The photo. was taken by Miss C. F. Beane, of Gilmanton, N.H., U.S.A., and sent by Miss F. A. Evans, 2,330, Parrish Street, Philadelphia, Pa.



SNAP-SHOTTING A DONKEY.

Here is an amusing snap-shot secured by Mr. A. Castleman Brown, of Arnold Hill, Leeds. Mr. Brown was on the point of taking a pretty picture of a farm boy on a donkey; the attempt has very nearly resulted in a snap-shot of a donkey on a farm boy. Moral: "Never count your snap-shots until they are developed."

WHEN IS A DRAKE NOT A DRAKE?

This is not a drake proper, as it possesses, plus its own limbs, a third limb, which makes it a drake and a half. Curiously enough, it is the largest and heaviest in a flock of twenty or thirty birds. Is that why the bird is blessed with three legs to support it? Photo. sent by Dr. Urquhart, of Mr. James Murray's Royal Asylum, Perth.

THE ADMIRAL OF THE CATAMARAN FLEET.

This extraordinary individual is a native of Madras. The story as told is, that a number of years ago the grandfather of the present admiral, by putting off through the surf in a catamaran, did some good service to a man-of-war then lying off the port. The commander presented him with a cast-off uniform and an old sword, created him "Admiral of the Catamaran Fleet," and gave him a written commission. The uniform, sword, and commission have been handed down from father to son, and are now in the hands of the original admiral's grandson, shown in full regimentals in the photo. He makes a call on almost all the steamers arriving in the harbour, and also pays a full-dress visit to the men-of-war whenever any call at the port. Mr. Wm. Anderson, of the ss. *Clan Menzies*, is responsible for this interesting contribution.

A BOY'S POCKET.

Mr. G. Johns, of 67, Upper Westbourne Villas, Hove, sends an amusing photograph of the contents of his seven-year-old boy's pocket. Here is an exhaustive list of this patent pantechnicon-pocket: One large pocket-handkerchief, one extract of meat jar, one lead soldier on horse, one piece of brass chain, one pocket-book, one calendar, one slate cleaner, various pieces of cord and paper, two brass wheels, one cork, one piece of coloured glass, and one toy china saucer!

A NOVEL VASE.

Mr. Brailsford, 4, Truman Street, Hucknall Torkard, Notts, sends the next photo., which he describes as follows: "Visiting a friend's house, some short time ago, I was much struck by a curious, though handsome-looking, vase standing upon the whatnot. I asked permission to examine it, and was really surprised to find it was made of rubbish that is generally consigned to the dust-cart. It consisted originally of an old jar, now covered with putty for a foundation, into which were pressed old scissors, bits of broken china ornaments, roses, leaves, heads, etc., broken combs, pen nibs, old brooches, walnut shells, buttons, corks, and many other things too numerous

to mention. The whole when dry was coated thrice with gold paint, and though curious, it looks anything but rubbishy. I inclose a photo. of one of these so-called 'rubbish jars' waiting for its coat of gold; it stands over 18in. high and weighs almost 14lb."

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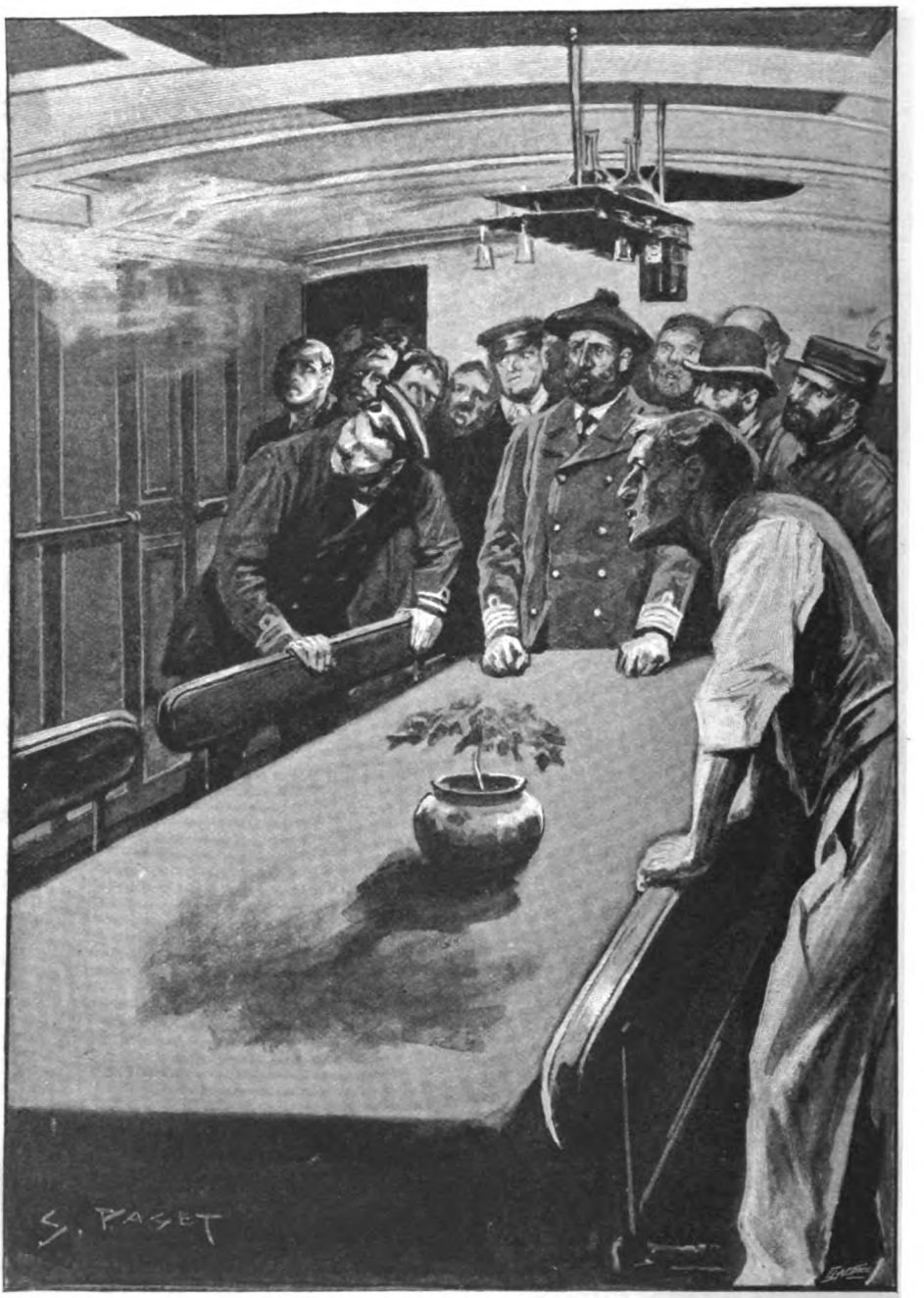
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.



"WHITE SMOKE WAS STREAMING THROUGH THE VENTILATED PANELS."

(*See page* 610.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xix. JUNE, 1900. No. 114

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ASTOR, LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

The Saloon Passenger

By E. W. Hornung.

AS the cable was hauled in, and the usual cheering passed between tug and ship, Skrimshire unclenched his teeth and gave tongue with a gusto as cynical as it was sincere. It had just come home to him that this was the last link with land, and he beheld it broken with ineffable relief. Tuskar Rock was already a little thing astern; the Australian coast lay the width of the world away; the captain did not expect even to sight any other, and had assured Skrimshire that the average passage was not less than ninety days. So, whatever was to happen in the end, he had three months more of life, and of such liberty as a sailing-ship affords.

He descended to his cabin, locked himself in, and lay down to read what the newspapers had to say about the murder. It seemed strange to Skrimshire that this was the first opportunity he had had of reading up his own crime; but the peculiar circumstances of his departure had forbidden him many a last pleasure ashore, and he was only too glad to have the papers to read now and a state-room to himself in which to read them. There was a heavy sea running, and Skrimshire was no sailor; but he would not have been without the motion, or even its effects upon himself. Both were an incessant reminder that his cabin was not a prison cell, and could not turn into one for three months at all events. Besides, he was not the man to surrender to a malady which is largely nervous. So he lay occupied in his berth; medium-sized, dark-skinned, neither young nor middle-aged; only respectably dressed, and with salient jaw unshaven since the thing of which he read without a flicker of the heavy eyelids or a tremor of the hairy hands.

He had five papers of that morning's date; the crime was worthily reported in them all: one or two had leaders on its peculiar atrocity. Skrimshire sighed when he came to the end: it was hard that he could see no more papers for three months. The egotism of the criminal was excited within him. It was lucky he was no longer on land: he would have run any risk for the evening papers. His very anonymity as author of the tragedy—the thing to which he owed his temporary security—was a certain irritation to him. He was not ashamed of what he had done. It read wonderfully, and was already admitted to have shown that diabolical cleverness and audacity for which Skrimshire alone deserved the credit; yet it looked as though he would never get it. Thus far, at least, it was plain that there was not a shred of evidence against him, or against any person upon earth. He sighed again; smiled at himself for sighing; and, closing his eyes for the first time since the murder, slept like a baby for several hours.

Skrimshire was the only passenger in the saloon, of which he presently became the life and soul. At the first meal he yielded to the temptation of a casual allusion to the murder on the Caledonian Railway; but though they had heard of it, neither captain nor officers showed much interest in the subject, which Skrimshire dropped with a show of equal indifference. And this was his last weakness of the kind. He threw his newspapers overboard, and conquered the morbid vanity they had inspired by a superb effort of the will. Remorse he had none, and for three months certain he was absolutely safe. So he determined to enjoy himself meanwhile; and, in doing so, being a dominant personality, he managed to diffuse considerable enjoyment throughout the ship.

This man was not a gentleman in either the widest or the narrowest sense of that invidious term. He wore cheap jewellery,

cheap tweeds as yellow as his boots, paper collars, and shirts of a brilliant blue. He spoke with a Cockney intonation which, in a Scottish vessel, grated more or less upon every ear. But he had funds of information and of anecdote as inexhaustible as his energy, and as entertaining as his rough good-humour. He took a lively interest in every incident of the voyage, and was as ready to go aloft in a gale of wind as to make up a rubber in any part of the ship. Within a month he was equally popular in the fore-castle, the steerage, and the captain's cabin. Then one morning Skrimshire awoke with a sense that something unusual was happening, followed by an instantaneous premonition of impending peril to himself.

There were too many boots and voices over his head; the ship was bowling sedately before the north-east trades, and otherwise as still as a ship could be. Skrimshire sat up and looked through his port-hole. A liner was passing them, also outward-bound, and some three or four miles to port. There was nothing alarming in that. Yet Skrimshire went straight on deck in his pyjamas; and, on the top rung of the poop-ladder, paused an instant, his now bearded jaw more salient than it had been for weeks.

Four little flags fluttered one above the other from the peak halliards, and at the weather-rail stood the captain, a powerful figure of a man, with his long legs planted well apart, and a marine binocular glued to his eyes. Near him was the second mate, a simple young fellow, who greeted Skrimshire with a nod.

"SKRIMSHIRE WENT STRAIGHT ON DECK."

"What's up, McKendrick? What is she?"

"A Castle liner; one o' Donal' Currie's Cape boats."

"Why did you signal her?" whispered Skrimshire.

"'Twas she signalled us."

"Do you know what it's all about?"

"No, but the captain does."

The captain turned round as they were speaking, and Skrimshire read his secret at a glance. It was his own, discovered since his flight and flashed across the sea by the liner's pennons. Meanwhile the captain was looking him up and down, his hitherto friendly face convulsed with hatred and horror; and Skrimshire realized the instant necessity of appearing absolutely unsuspicious of suspicion.

"Mornin', captain," said he, with all the cheerful familiarity which already existed between them; "and what's all this bloomin' signallin' about?"

"Want to know?" thundered the captain, now looking him through and through.

"You bet I do."

And Skrimshire held his breath upon an insinuating grin, parrying plain abhorrence with seeming unconcern, until the other merely stared.

"Then you can mind your own business," roared the captain, at last, "and get off my poop—and speak to my officer of the watch again at your peril!"

"Well—I'm—hanged!" drawled Skrimshire, and turned on his heel with the raised eyebrows of bewildered innocence; but the drops stood thick upon his forehead when he saw himself next minute in his state-room mirror.

So he was found out; and the captain had been informed he had a murderer aboard; and detectives would meet the ship in Hobson's Bay, and the murderer would be escorted back through the Suez Canal and duly hanged after nothing better than a run round the world for his money! The thing had happened before: it had been the fate of the first train murderer; but he had taken the wrong hat in his panic. What on earth had Skrimshire left behind him that was going to hang him after all?

He could not think, nor was that the thing to think about. The immediate necessity he had seen at once, with extraordinary quickness of perception, and he had already acted upon it with a nerve more extraordinary still. He must preserve such a front as should betray not the shadow of a dream that he could by any possibility be suspected, by any soul on board; absolute ease must be his watchword, absolute security his pose; then they might like to save themselves the inconvenience of keeping him in irons, knowing that detectives would be waiting to do all the dirty work at the other end. And in two months' thinking a man should hit upon something, or he deserved to swing.

The opening day was not the worst. The captain's rudeness was enough to account for a change in any man's manner; and Skrimshire did both well and naturally to sulk for the remainder of that day. His unusual silence gave him unusual opportunities for secret observation, and he was thankful indeed that for the time being there was no necessity to live up to his popular reputation. The scene of the morning was all over the ship; yet, so far as the saloon passenger could see, the captain had not told anybody as yet. The chief mate invited him into his cabin for a smoke, spread the usual newspaper for a spittoon, and spun the inevitable yarns; but then the chief was a hard-bitten old dog with nerves of iron and a face of brass; he might know everything, or nothing at all; it was for Skrimshire to adapt his manner to the first hypothesis, and to impress the mate with the exuberance of his spirits and the utter lightness of his heart. Later in the morning he had some conversation with the second officer. It was but a word, and yet it confirmed the culprit in his conviction about the signals.

"What have I done," he asked McKendrick, "to make the old man jump down my throat like that?"

"It wasna you," replied the second; "it was the signals. But ye might have known not to bother him wi' questions just then."

"But what the deuce were the signals about?"

"That's more than I ken, Bennett."

This was Skrimshire's *alias* on board.

"Can't you find out?"

"Mebbee I might—after a bit."

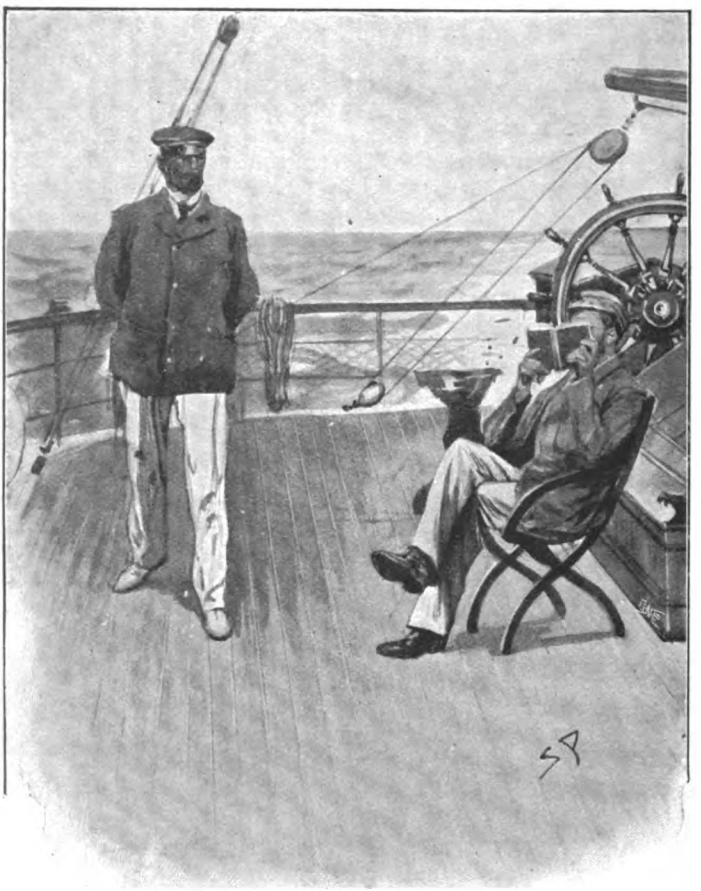
"Why not now?"

"The old man's got the book in his cabin—the deectionary-book about the signalling, ye ken. It's my place to keep yon, but the old man's carried it off, and there's no' another in the ship."

"Aha!"

"Ou, ay, it was somethin' for hissel', nae doot; but none of us kens what; an' noo we never wull, for he's as close as tar, is the old man."

The "old man" was in point of fact no older than Skrimshire, but he had worked his way aft from ship's boy, and a cruel boyhood followed by an early command had aged and hardened him. A fine seaman, and a firm, though fiery, commander, Captain Neilson had also as kind a heart as one



"HE SULKED IN HIS DECK-CHAIR ON THE POOP."

could wish to win, and a mind as simple as it was fair. It was on these qualities that Skrimshire determined to play, as he sulked in his deck-chair on the poop of the four-masted barque *Lochwinnoch*, while the captain thumped up and down in his rubber soles, his face black with thought, and a baleful eye upon the picture of offended oblivion behind the novel in the chair.

It was an interesting contest that was beginning between this pair, both of whom were strong, determined, wilful men; but one was as cunning as the other was kind, and he not only read his better like a book, but supplied in his turn a very legible and entirely plausible reading of himself. He never dreamt of impressing the captain as an innocent man; that would entail an alteration of pose inconsistent with the attitude of one who entertained no tittle of suspicion that the morning's signalling had been about himself. On the contrary, what he had really been, and what he must now doubly appear, was the guilty man who had very little fear of ever being detected, and not the fleeting shadow of a notion that such detection had already taken place.

This was the obvious and the only *rôle;* he had played it instinctively thus far, and need only go on as he had begun. The reward was at best precarious. It depended entirely upon the character and temperament of Captain Neilson. Skrimshire credited him with sufficient strength and sufficient humanity to do nothing and to tell nobody until the Australian detectives came aboard. But that remained to be proved. Neilson might leave him a free man all the voyage, and yet put him in irons before the very end; it would be kinder to do so at once. However, he should not do so at all if Skrimshire could help it; and he was not long in letting fall an oblique and delicate, though an excessively audacious, hint upon the responsibility of such a course in his own particular case.

It was at the midday meal, while the smoke of the accursed liner was still a dirty cloud on the horizon. Neilson remained morose and silent, while the offended passenger would not give him word or look, but, on the other hand, talked more than ever, and with invidious gaiety, to the first and second officers. The captain glowered at his plate, searching his transparent soul for the ideal course, and catching very little of the conversation; how the topic of suicide arose he never knew.

"An' I call it th' act of a coward," young McKendrick was declaring; "you can say what you like, but a man's no' a man that does the like o' that."

"Well, you think about it next time you're havin' a shave, old man," retorted Skrimshire,

pleasantly. "Think o' buryin' a razor in your neck, and the pain, and the blood comin' over your fingers like as though you'd turned on the hot tap; and if you think long enough you'll know whether it's the act of a coward or whether it ain't."

"I'd blow my blessed head in," said the chief officer. "It'd be quicker."

"Oh, if it comes to that," said Skrimshire, "I'd take prussic acid, for choice. It would take a lot to make me, I admit; but I'd do it like a shot to escape a worse death. I've often thought, for instance, what a rum thing it is, in these days, that a man of any sense or education whatever should let himself live to be hung!"

The captain looked up at this; so far he had merely listened. But Skrimshire was addressing himself to the chief mate at the other end of the table; neither look nor tone were intended to include Captain Neilson, the one being averted, and the other lowered, to a nice degree of insolent disregard. On the other hand, the manner of this theoretical suicide was all audacity and nonchalance, combined with a certain underlying sincerity which gave it a peculiar value in the mind of one listener. In a word, it was the manner of a man so convinced of his own security as to afford the luxury of telling the truth about himself in jest.

"They don't give you a chance," said the mate. "They watch you night and day. You'd be a good man, once you'd got to dance the hornpipe on nothing, if you went out any other way."

"Nevertheless, I'd do it," said Skrimshire, with cheery confidence. "I'd back myself to do it, and before their eyes."

"Poison?"

"Yes."

"In a ring, eh?"

"A ring! Do you suppose they'd leave you your rings? No; it might be in a hollow tooth, and it might not. All I say is that I'd back myself to cheat the hangman." Skrimshire said it through his black moustache. "And I'd do it, too," he added, after a pause.

Then, at last, the captain put in his word. "You would do well," said he, quietly. "I once saw a man swing, and I never want to see another. Ugh!"

His eyes met Skrimshire's, which fell deliberately; and the talkative tongue wagged no more that meal.

Thereafter Neilson was civility itself, only observant civility. He had made up his mind in the knotty matter of the suspected murderer, and the latter read his determination as he had read the difficulty which it solved, if only for the present.

"So he means to let me go loose, only keeping an eye on me; so far, so good. But how long – how long? If I thought he was going to put me in irons as soon as he sights the land——"

He looked over the side, and a slight shudder shook even his frame. It was very blue water now, the depth unfathomable. A shark had been seen that morning. And, sharks or no sharks, Skrimshire could not swim! But he had two months of steady thought before him.

"HE LOOKED OVER THE SIDE."

Meanwhile the captain showed some cunning in his turn. He evidently wished to convince himself that Skrimshire had not suspected the signalling. One day, at any rate, the passenger was invited into the captain's cabin, in quite the old friendly fashion, for a pipe and a chat; in the middle of which Neilson left him for five minutes to speak to the officer of the watch. As the north-east trades blew as strong and true as ever, as the yards had not been touched for days, and as no sail was in sight, Skrimshire scented a trap, and presently beheld one set under his nose in the shape of the signalling-book. Skrimshire smiled. The captain found him buried in a magazine, and his little trap untouched. And the obvious deduction was also final to the sailor's mind.

Six weeks produced no change in the outward situation; but brought the voyage so near its end that every soul but one waxed merry with the thought of shore—and that one seemed the merriest of them all. They had come from the longitude of the Cape to that of Kangaroo Island in twenty days, and in all probability would enter Port Phillip Heads in two days more. In one week the *Lochwinnoch* had logged close upon two thousand miles; boy and man, her commander had never made such an "easting" in his seagoing life. His pleasure and his pride were alike enormous, and Skrimshire conceived that his general goodwill towards men could scarcely have suffered by the experience. He determined, at all events, to feel his way to such compassion as an honest man could be expected to extend towards an unhung murderer; and he felt it with that mixture of cautious craft and sheer impudence which made him the formidable criminal he was.

It was the night that might prove the last of the voyage, and the last night of freedom for the unhappy Skrimshire. Unhappy he undoubtedly was, for the strain of continuing as he had begun, "the life and soul of the ship," had told upon even his nerves in the end, though to the end it had been splendidly borne. To-night, however, as he paced the poop by the captain's side, he exhibited, for the first time, a despondency which exactly fitted in with Neilson's conception of his case.

"I shall never forget this voyage," said Skrimshire, sighing. "You may not believe me, captain, but I'm sorry it's over. I am, indeed; no doubt I'm the only man in the ship who is."

"And why are you?" asked Neilson, eyeing his passenger for once with the curiosity which had so long consumed him, as also with the sympathy which had grown upon him, despite, or on account of, those sinister signals from the Castle liner.

Skrimshire shrugged.

"Oh, that's a long story. I've had a rum life of it, and not what you would call the life of a saint. This voyage will stand out as one of its happiest chapters, that's all; and it may be one of the last."

"Why do you say that?"

"Oh, one can never tell."

"But what did you think of doing out there?"

"God knows!"

Neilson was miserable. There was a ring in the hoarse voice that went straight to his heart. He longed to tell this man what was in store for him—what he himself knew—but he conquered the longing as he had conquered it before. Time enough when the detectives came on board; dirty work and all responsibility would very well keep for them.

So the good captain thought to himself, as the pair took turns in silence: so the dominant brain at his side willed and intended that he should think.

"Whatever you hear of me," resumed Skrimshire, at last, "and however great a beast I may some day turn out, remember that I wasn't one aboard your ship. Will you, captain? Remember the best of me and I'll be grateful, wherever I am, and whatever happens."

"I will," said Neilson, hoarse in his turn; and he grasped the guilty hand. Skrimshire had some ado to keep from smiling, but there was another point upon which he required an assurance, and he sought it after a decent pause.

"So you expect to pass the Otway some time to-morrow?"

"By dinner-time, if we're lucky."

"And there you signal?"

"Yes, they should hear of us in Melbourne early to-morrow afternoon."

"And what about the pilot?"

"Oh, he'll come aboard later—certainly not before evening. It's easy as mid-ocean till you come to the Heads, and we can't be there before nightfall, even if the wind holds fair."

"Well, let's hope it may. So long, captain, and a thousand thanks for all your kindness. Dark night, by the way?"

"Yes; let's hope to-morrow won't be like it."

But the next night was darker still; there was neither moon nor star, and Skrimshire was thankful to have had speech with the captain while he could, for now he would speak to nobody, and to-morrow——

There was no to-morrow in Skrimshire's mind, there was only to-night. There was the hour he had been living for these six long weeks. There was the plan that had come to him with the south-east trades, and rolled in his mind through the Southern Ocean, only to reach perfection within the last few hours. But it was perfect now. And all beyond lay dark.

"Isn't that their boat, sir?"

It was the chief steward who wanted to know; he was dallying on the poop in the excitement of the occasion. The captain stood farther aft: an anxious face, a red cigar-end, and a blue Tam-o'-Shanter were all of him that showed in the intense darkness. The main-yard had just been backed, and the chief officer was now on the quarter-deck, seeing the rope-ladder over the side. It was through his glasses that Skrimshire was watching the pilot's cutter, or rather her lights, and as well as he could, by their meagre rays, the little boat that now bobbed against the cutter's side.

"It is the boat, ain't it, sir?" persisted the steward.

"Yes, I think so," said Skrimshire. "How many men come with the pilot, as a rule?"

"Only himself and a chap to row him."

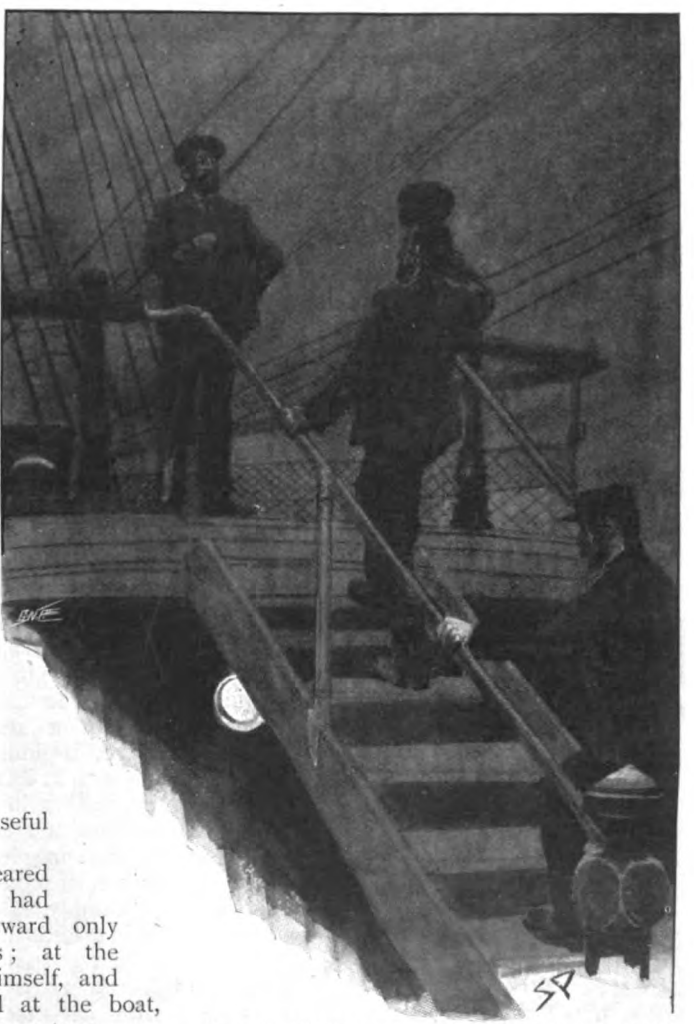
"Ah! You might give these to the chief officer, steward. I'm going to my cabin for a minute. Don't forget to thank the mate for lending me his glasses: they've been exceedingly useful to me."

And Skrimshire disappeared down the ladder; his tone had been strange, but the steward only remembered this afterwards; at the time he was too excited himself, and too glad of a glass to level at the boat, to note any such nicety as a mere tone.

"Four of them, by Jingo," mused the steward. "I wonder what that's for?"

But he did not wonder long: in a very few minutes the four were on board, and ascending the same ladder by which Skrimshire had gone below, the pilot at their head. Neilson received them at the break of the poop.

"I congratulate you, captain," was the pilot's greeting: "we didn't expect you before next week. Now, first allow me," and he lowered his voice, "to introduce Inspector Robins, of the Melbourne police; this gentleman is an officer he has brought with him; and my man has come aboard for a message for the shore. Mr. Robins would like a word with you before we let him go. There is no hurry,



"NEILSON RECEIVED THEM AT THE BREAK OF THE POOP."

for I'm very much afraid I can't take you in till daylight."

Neilson took the inspector to the weather-rail.

"I know what's coming," he said. "The *Garth Castle* signalled——"

"I know, I know. Have you got him? Have you got him?" rapped out Robins.

"Safe and sound," whispered the captain; "and thinks himself as right as the bank, poor devil!"

"Then you didn't put him in irons?"

"No; I thought it better not to. He'd have committed suicide. I spotted that; sounded him without his knowing," said the crafty captain. "I happened to read the signals myself, and I never let on to a soul in the ship."

The good fellow looked delighted with himself behind his red cigar, but the acute face of the detective scarcely reflected his satisfaction.

"Well, that's all right if *he's* all right," said Robins. "If you don't mind, captain, I'd like to be introduced to him. One or both of us will spend the night with him, by your leave."

"As you like," said Neilson; "but I can't help feeling sorry for him. He's no more idea of this than the man in the moon. That you, steward? Where's Mr. Bennett? He was here a minute ago."

"Yes, sir; only just gone below, sir."

"Well, go and ask him to come up and drink with the pilot. I'll introduce him to the pilot, and you can do what you like," continued the captain, only wishing he could shirk a detestable duty altogether. "But I give you fair warning, this is a desperate man, or I'm much mistaken in him."

"Desperate!" chuckled the inspector; "don't we know it? It seems to have been as bad a murder as you've had in the old country for a long time. In a train. All planned. Victim in one carriage, our friend in the next; got along footboard in tunnel, shot him dead through window, and got back. Case of revenge, and other fellow no beauty, but this one's got to swing. On his way to join your ship, too; passage booked beforehand. The most cold-blooded plant——"

It was the chief steward, breathless and panic-stricken.

"His door's locked——"

"He always does lock it," exclaimed the captain, as Robins darted to the ladder with an oath.

"But now he won't answer!" cried the steward.

And even with his words the answer came, in the terrific report of a revolver fired in a confined space. Next instant the inspector had hurled himself into the little saloon, the others at his heels, and half the ship's company at theirs. There was no need to point out the culprit's cabin. White smoke was streaming through the ventilated panels; all stood watching it, but for a time none spoke. Then Robins turned upon the captain.

"We have you to thank for this, Captain Neilson," said he. "It is you who will have to answer for it."

Neilson turned white, but it was white heat with him.

"And so I will," he thundered, "but not to you! I don't answer to any confounded Colonial policemen, and I don't take cheek from one, either. By Heaven, sir, I'm master of this ship, and for two pins I'll have you over the side again, detective or no detective. Do your business and break in that door, and you leave me to mind mine at the proper time and in the proper place."

He was furious with the fury of a masterful mariner, whose word is law aboard his own vessel, and yet beneath this virile passion there lurked a certain secret satisfaction in the thought that the companion of so many weeks was at all events not to hang. But the tragedy which had occurred was the greater unpleasantness for himself; indeed it might well lead to something more, and Neilson stood in the grip of grim considerations; in his own doorway, while Robins sent for the carpenter without addressing another syllable to the captain.

The saloon had been invaded by steerage passengers, and even by members of the crew, but discipline was for once a secondary matter in the eyes of Captain Neilson, and their fire was all for the insolent intruder who had dared to blame him aboard his own ship. The carpenter had to fight his way through a small, but exceedingly dense, crowd, beginning on the quarter-deck outside, and at its thickest in the narrow passage terminating in the saloon. On his arrival, however, the lock was soon forced, and the door swung inwards in a sudden silence, broken as suddenly by the detective's voice.

"Empty, by Heaven!" he shrieked. "Hunt him—he's given us the slip!"

And the saloon emptied only less rapidly than it had filled, till Neilson had it to himself; he stepped over to the passenger's cabin, half expecting to find him hiding in

some corner after all. There he was wrong; nor did he at once grasp the full significance of what he did find.

A revolver was dangling from a peg on one side of the cabin—dangling by a yard of twine secured to the trigger. A few more inches of the twine, tied to the butt, had been severed by burning, as had another yard dangling from another peg at the opposite side of the cabin. An inch of candle lay upon the floor. The twine had been passed through it: there was its mark in the wax. The whole had been strung across the cabin and the candle lighted before Skrimshire left; the revolver, hung by the trigger as a man is hanged by the neck, had been given a three-foot drop, and gone off duly as the flame burnt down to the string. Such was the plan which an ingenious (if perverted) mind had taken several weeks to perfect.

Neilson rushed on deck, to find all hands at the rail, and a fresh sensation in the air. The pilot met him on the poop.

"My boat's gone!" he cried. "And the night like pitch!"

Neilson stood thunderstruck.

"Did you leave a man aboard?"

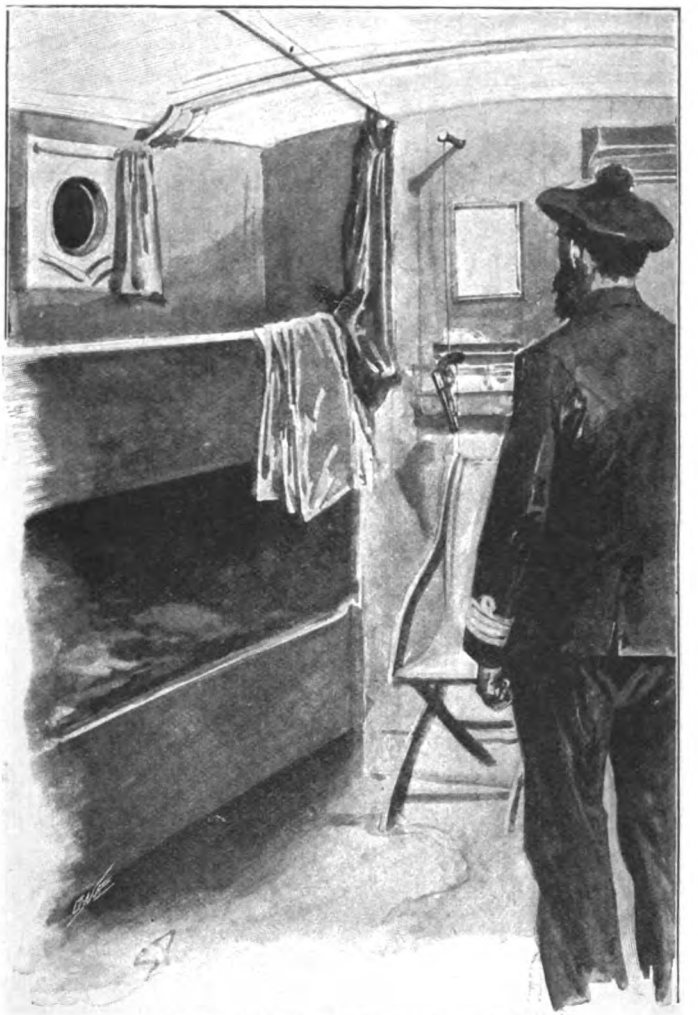
"No; he came up for a telegram for the police in town."

"Then you can't blame me there."

And the captain leapt upon the rail at the break of the poop.

"Silence!" he roared. "Silence—every man of you! If we can't see we must listen . . . that's it . . . not a whisper . . . now. . ."

At first there was nothing to be heard but the quick-drawn breath from half-a-hundred throats; then, out of the impenetrable darkness, came the thud, thud, thud of an oar in a rowlock, already some distance away; but in which direction it was impossible to tell on such a night.



"A REVOLVER WAS DANGLING FROM A PEG."

How the Great Paris Telescope was Built.

WHEN M. François Deloncle a few years ago proposed, as one of the *clous* for the Paris Exhibition, the construction of a telescope infinitely larger than any the world had yet seen, he did not foresee that if his project were carried out it would, in all probability, inaugurate a new era in our knowledge of the worlds by which we are surrounded, nor, certainly, did he realize all the difficulties in the way of its execution. Thanks, however, to the co-operation of three or four distinguished workers, these difficulties have, one by one, all been overcome, and the telescope now promises to be one of the chief attractions at the Paris Exhibition.

At first sight the layman has some pains in comprehending why, if it be possible to make a telescope 65ft. in length, like the instrument shown at the World's Fair at Chicago, there should be any insurmountable obstacle nowadays to the construction of an instrument double or triple, or even ten times, the size. "Surely," he says, "all that is necessary is to make a longer and wider tube, and have larger lenses!" There are, unfortunately, one or two important factors which militate against the practical realization of the problem thus simply expressed.

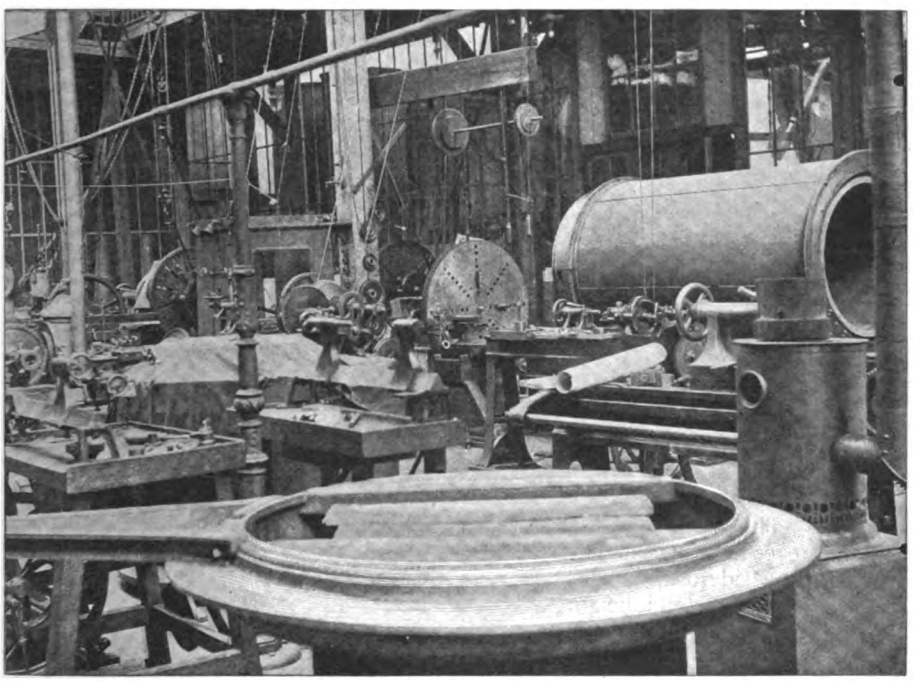
As far as the tube is concerned, it is, of course, in these days of Eiffel towers, and Brooklyn, Forth, and Tower bridges, mere child's play for the engineer to make a tube of almost any capacity; but to utilize this tube as a telescope, even supposing lenses of proportionate size were obtainable, is quite another matter. A telescope 2ft. or 3ft. in length can be held in the hand without any very great discomfort, as everyone is aware, and directed towards any distant object we may wish to examine. When, however, the telescope is 10ft., or 20ft., or 100ft. in length, and heavy in proportion, such a system of handling it is manifestly beyond our capacity, and the long tube has to be supported by some mechanical contrivance in such a manner that its direction may be changed at the will of the person using it. The telescope, too, must be under shelter of some kind. These are the two conditions which have produced the well-known hemispherical form of most observatories. The instrument, supported at its centre, is placed under a dome, in one side of which there is an opening from top to bottom. Towards this opening the telescope is pointed, being slung in such a manner that it may be made to cover any portion of the sky opposite the opening. In addition to this, the entire dome, including the platform on which the telescope is fixed, may be made to revolve bodily, so that all parts of the heavens may be successively brought under examination.

When the telescope exceeds a certain length, however, fresh difficulties present themselves. In the first place, a long tube supported at one point only is inclined to shake and vibrate in such a way as to render all exact observation out of the question; and, in the second place, the size of the dome must be increased proportionately to the length of the instrument. The longer the telescope, too, the quicker it has to be moved in order to follow the varying position of any celestial object that may be under observation. For these and other reasons it has hitherto been deemed impossible to make the telescope tubes as long as they might be to correspond with the power of the lenses with which they were supplied. The lenses, for instance, in the Chicago telescope measured 40in. in diameter, instead of 50in., the diameter of those made for the Paris telescope, yet the length of the tube was only 20 mètres instead of 60 mètres, exactly one-third!

To obtain the best results from any optical instrument it is clear that the proper focus must be used, and one of the first conditions decided upon for the Paris instrument was that it should be made as long as was compatible with the size of the lenses, which in

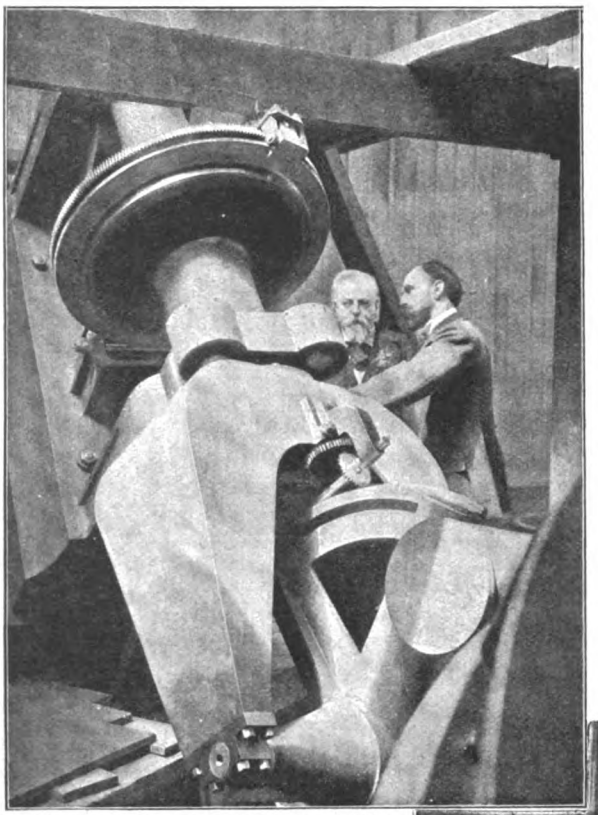
their turn were the largest it was possible to construct. The length fixed upon was 60 mètres, and the work was intrusted to the experienced hands of M. Gautier, the constructor of so many famous instruments.

It was soon discovered, however, that the mechanical difficulties would be almost insurmountable. A dome to cover such an instrument would need to have a diameter of at least 210ft., and be high in proportion, while it would be next to impossible to insure the perfect stability of the instrument itself. To move so enormous a dome with facility it would be necessary to float it in some liquid, such as mercury, as has been done in the case of the dome of the Nice observatory. This course, too, has its inconvenient aspects, however. The Nice dome, a mere toy compared to the dome to cover a 60-mètre instrument, provokes vibrations often in turning that may be distinctly felt in the hill on which the observatory is erected, and still more so, naturally, in the delicately-poised telescope itself. When it is considered that even a telescope of 60 mètres is, compared to the incalculable distances it is called upon to explore, like an atom of the thread of a spider's web, it will be understood at once how the slightest vibration may cause it to deviate in such a way as to nullify the exertions of the most skilled astronomer. In addition to this, if the 60-mètre telescope were mounted in the ordinary way, the person using it would have to be constantly moving after the eye-piece at the rate of about a foot every minute. The idea of a revolving dome, therefore, was abandoned as impracticable, and the system of the siderostat, invented by Léon Foucault, nearly half a century ago, adopted in its place. With Foucault's siderostat, the telescope proper is fixed in a horizontal position, and instead of being pointed directly at the sky, is pointed at a mirror in which the sky is reflected. The observer, therefore, looks, not at the moon, for instance, directly, but at the image of the moon reflected in the mirror of the siderostat. The mirror itself, by an elaborate combination of levers and clockwork, moves automatically in all directions, so as to reflect almost every portion of the firmament. Meanwhile, the astronomer is comfortably seated in his arm-chair at the other end of the instrument making his observations.



GENERAL VIEW OF M. GAUTIER'S WORKSHOP—SHOWING VARIOUS PARTS OF THE TELESCOPE IN COURSE OF CONSTRUCTION.
From a Photograph.

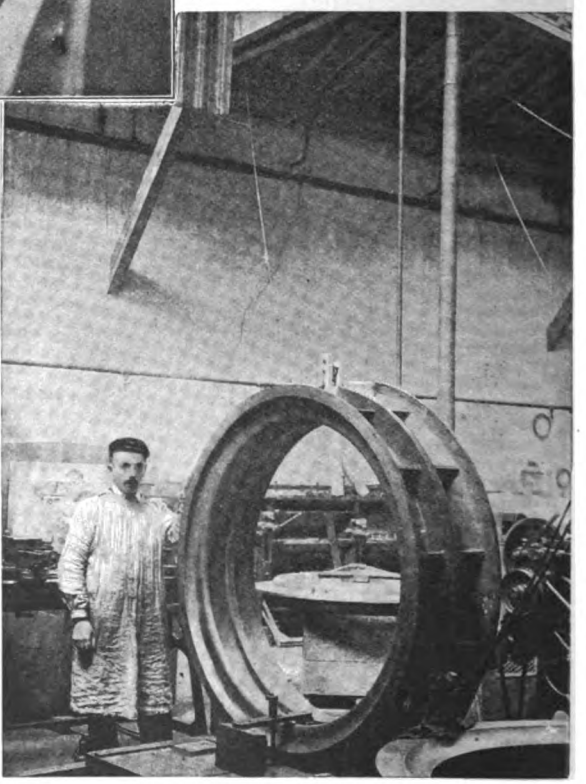
Everything about the telescope and the siderostat constructed by M. Gautier is on a gigantic scale. The tube of the telescope is made of twenty-four separate sections, for all the world like the sections of a big city water



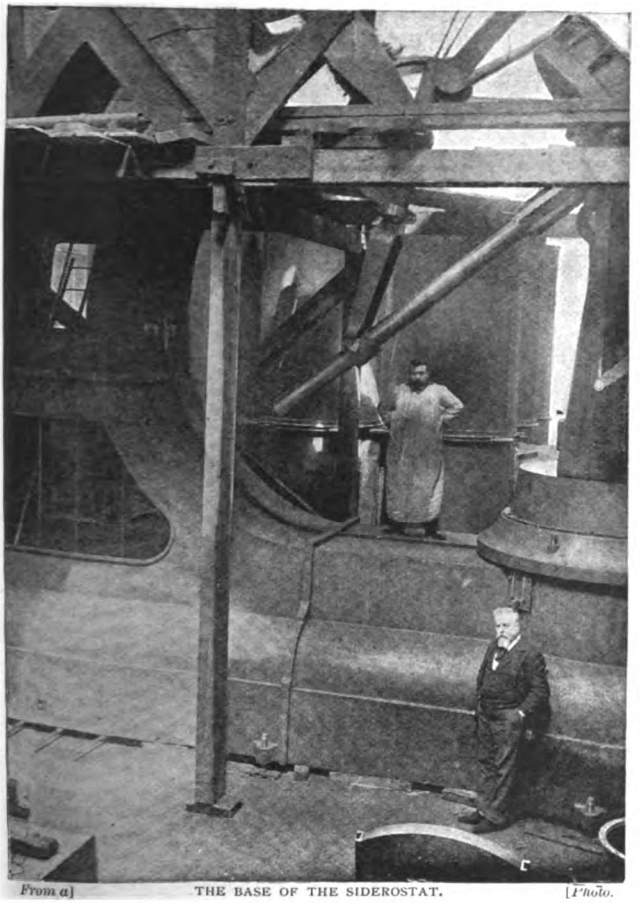
ON THE TOP OF THE SIDEROSTAT—M. GAUTIER EXPLAINING THE MECHANISM TO THE WRITER OF THE ARTICLE.
From a Photo.

main, the interior diameter of which is nearly 5ft. The total weight of the tube is over 21 tons. The framework of the siderostat weighs 45 tons, and attains a total height of 34½ft. The steel frame to hold the mirror weighs alone more than 3 tons, and when the mirror is in place, frame and glass together weigh nearly 7 tons, the weight of the glass being over 3½ tons. The portion of the siderostat on which the mirror and its frame are mounted floats in a bath of mercury in such a way that, though it weighs 17½ tons, an effort of only about 11lb. is required to make it revolve. In the eye-piece of the telescope an ingenious device has been elaborated by M. Gautier, by which any inconvenience that might result from the apparent movement of the stars, as reflected in the mirror, is adequately corrected. Such is a brief account of what may be termed the mechanism of the telescope.

The question of the mirror and the lenses is, it is evident, no less important. The former, which measures more than 6½ft. in diameter, is 10½in. thick, and weighs, as has been said, over 3½ tons. It was cast at the celebrated glass-works of Jeumont, in the North of France, under the personal supervision of M. Despret, the distinguished director of the establishment. For the operation a special furnace and oven had to be constructed, the latter capable of containing twenty tons of molten glass. It was only after a long series of experiments extending over several months that a satisfactory result was obtained. The great danger is that, in the process of cooling, which occupies about a month, the temperature being gradually lowered each day, the disc of glass will crack. Out of twenty discs cast, two only



A MOUNT TO HOLD ONE OF THE LENSES.
From a Photograph.



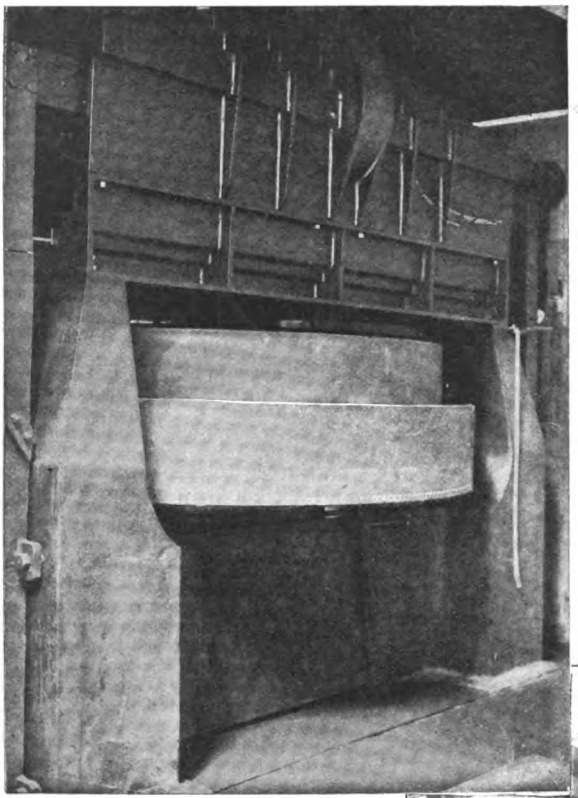
From a] THE BASE OF THE SIDEROSTAT. *[Photo.*

turned out perfect. Exactly how many thousand pounds each of them is worth it is difficult to say, since they are the only two of their species in the world. The glass to be used in the siderostat was conveyed from Jeumont to M. Gautier's Paris workshop with the most extraordinary precautions. A special train was chartered to run during the night, at a time when the line was clear and the journey might be made without a single stoppage *en route*. The engine-driver was instructed to maintain as far as possible a uniform rate of speed all the time. On arrival in the capital, the glass was transferred from the train to the cart, and then to M. Gautier, surrounded by more guards than if a prisoner of State had been in question.

The lenses, 50in. in diameter, were cast by M. Mantois, who occupies the proud position of being the only maker of large lenses, not merely in France but in the whole world. The manufacture of lenses has always been looked upon in France more in the light of a profession than anything else. M. Mantois, whose best previous performances were the 40in. lenses he cast for the Chicago telescope, worthily follows in the footsteps of the *verriers gentilshommes* of the reign of Louis XIV. At that epoch, the largest lenses the *verriers gentilshommes* could furnish the astronomers of the day with had a diameter of barely 6in., yet, even with so imperfect an equipment as this, many important discoveries were made. More than two centuries ago Cassini even went the length of constructing a sort of primitive telescope 70 mètres long, though it is true it had no tube. The lens he fixed at the top of a tower that he found fortunately ready to hand. To catch and follow a star through so tiny a disc of glass perched at the summit of a tower 165ft. in height can have been no easy task, and must have involved a series of gymnastic feats of which not all astronomers would be capable. The paths of the modern star-gazers are smoother.

In the whole range of industry there is probably no more elaborate process than that of lens-making. The substances of which the glass is formed have to be boiled and melted and cooled over and over again, until the mass is absolutely free from every flaw. Only then can the actual casting of the lens be attempted with any hope of success. After the lapse of about three weeks or a month, to allow for the gradual cooling to take place, the mould is at last broken open, as often as not only to disclose the lens cracked in a score of places, the result of many months' anxious labour wasted! That this is not always the case, however, is sufficiently proved by the fact that M. Mantois has successfully cast all the lenses required for the telescope. They weigh considerably over half a ton apiece, and have cost more than £3,000 each.

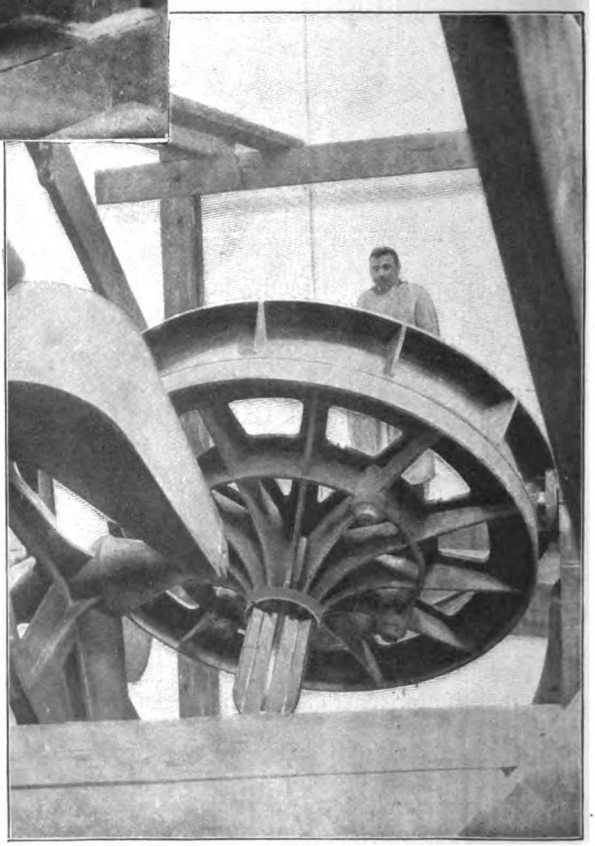
The problems of the tube, the mirror, and the lenses being thus solved, it might be thought that all was henceforth plain sailing. An unexpected difficulty now arose, however, that for a long time appeared insuperable, and seemed likely to render the realization



THE MIRROR IN PROCESS OF POLISHING.
From a Photograph.

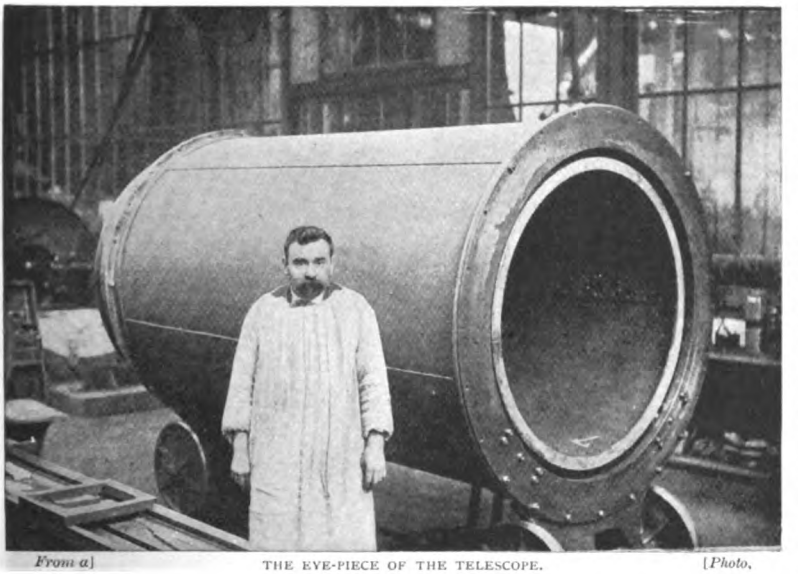
of the telescope impossible after all. Mirrors and lenses for optical purposes have not only to be cast, they have to be polished as well. A workman sufficiently skilled to polish large optical lenses is worth almost his weight in gold. There are probably not more than a score or two of really perfect operators in the two hemispheres. The slightest inequality in the surface of the glass—if, for example, it is the twenty-thousandth part of an inch thicker at one part than at another—robs it of all value, being sufficient to distort the image reflected in it out of all recognition, and especially would this be the case with such a powerful instrument as a 60-mètre telescope.

Ever since the first glass for optical purposes was made it has been accepted as an axiom that the polishing could only be efficiently performed by the human hand. When it was noised abroad, however, that there was a glass of 6½ft. in diameter to smooth down and polish perfectly flat and level, the doughtiest champions among the polishers paled and stood aghast. The existence of the telescope seemed again in jeopardy, when M. Gautier came forward with a proposition he had been revolving in his mind for years past. "Why not polish and grind down the surface of the glass by machinery?" he asked. The polishers scouted the idea as utterly ridiculous. According to them, the human hand, and the human hand alone, was sensitive enough for such work; but a glass with a surface two mètres in diameter was beyond even the most sensitive hand to attempt. M. Gautier persisted, therefore, and has triumphantly vindicated the superiority of machine over hand labour, though



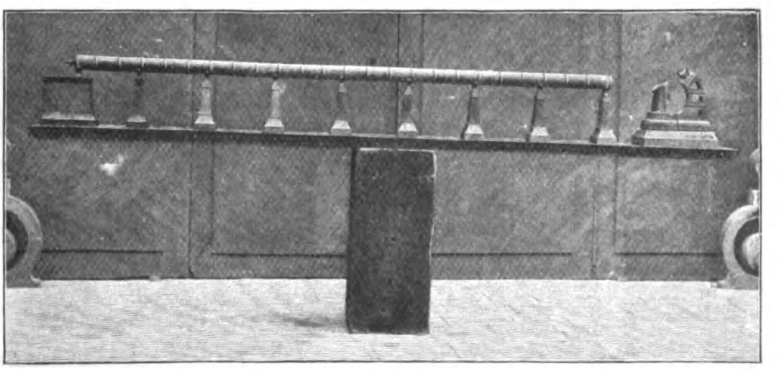
STEEL FRAME FOR HOLDING THE MIRROR.
From a Photograph.

at cost of what efforts it would be too long to set down here at length. It is enough to say that he had to construct special workshops and invent special machines, modifying the latter as the experiment proceeded. One of the greatest obstacles to be overcome was to counteract the heating of the glass by friction during the polishing process, which has taken the greater part of a year. It was at times not possible to continue the polishing for more than ten minutes in the course of the twenty-four hours, all the rest of the time being spent in cleaning and regulating the machines. A variation of a single degree in the temperature of the workshop, or an excessive amount of dust in the atmosphere, was sufficient to destroy the effect of a week's labour. The workman charged with the task of supplying the fine emery powder to the machine had to hold his breath each time he approached. M. Gautier proved to demonstration that, if a hand were laid for an instant on the surface of the glass, the heat evolved was enough to raise a sort of bump at the spot, not distinguishable, of course, by the naked eye, but quite sufficient to destroy the uniformity of the surface and render it useless for the purpose for which it was intended. A bump raised in this way by the contact of a hand for a few seconds may take hours before it finally subsides and disappears. If such a bump passes under the polisher, a hollow at that particular spot is the result, which, in turn, has to be got rid of by polishing down all the rest of the surface! It was even found necessary to regulate the temperature of the various parts of the machine itself by making careful and continual tests with a delicately graduated thermometer, placing a movable gas-burner, with the flame lowered to the merest speck, near any part that was colder than the rest.



From a] THE EYE-PIECE OF THE TELESCOPE. *[Photo.*

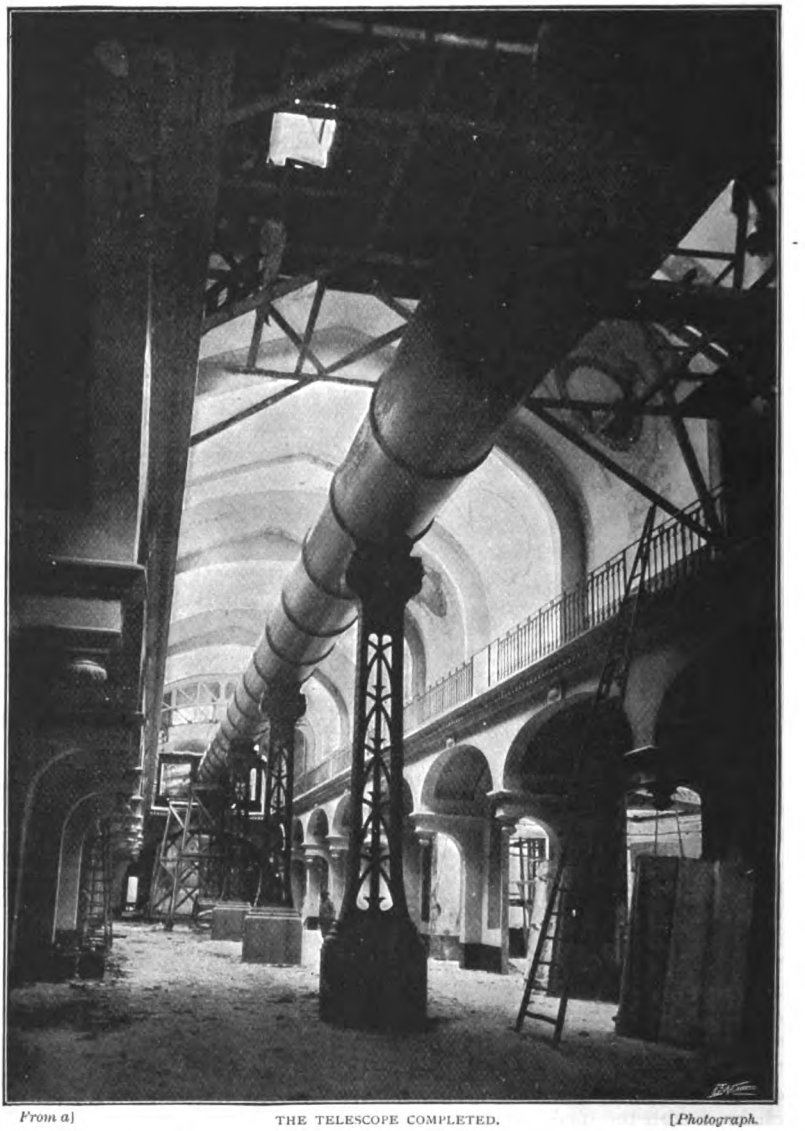
It was said at the commencement of this article that the 60-mètre telescope will probably inaugurate a new era in astronomical science. Should this prediction prove correct, it will be due principally to M. Gautier's discovery, which is equivalent to a perfect revolution in the optician's art. Henceforth the lens-founder is independent of the human polisher, and if he can succeed in making larger lenses, M. Gautier's machines are there to complete them. M. Gautier himself



From a] MODEL OF THE FINISHED TELESCOPE AND SIDEROSTAT. *[Photo.*

does not hesitate to designate everything that has up to now been constructed in the shape of optical instruments as "infantine" compared to what the near future will probably produce. Lenses of 60in. and more in diameter are already spoken of!

At the Exhibition the telescope is housed in a long gallery pointing due north and south, the siderostat being, of course, placed to the north. The southern end of the gallery, where the eye-piece of the telescope is, terminates in a large amphitheatre, in which the public will be seated. When the atmosphere is clear and propitious for astronomical observations, the images reflected by the instrument will be projected directly on to an enormous screen, about 30ft. in height, at the extremity of the amphitheatre, and a lecturer will be there to explain to the audience the various scenes in the moon and stars that pass before their eyes on the screen, enormously magnified, of course.



From a] THE TELESCOPE COMPLETED. *[Photograph.*

Cloudy weather does not necessarily imply an empty theatre, however. The telescope plays the *rôle* of a gigantic photographic camera as well as that of an ordinary telescope, and, at odd moments, will take photographs of all that is going on in the firmament. The moon and stars have, it is true, been photographed a good deal of late years, but the largest pictures yet taken have only had a diameter of between 6in. and 7in. Those that M. Deloncle's telescope will take are over 2ft. in diameter, and by the time the picture is thrown on to the screen this is magnified by 10ft. or 12ft. The spectator will see the surface of the moon at an apparent distance of only thirty-five miles, and almost have the illusion of making an excursion among its mountains and valleys!

Facsimile of a Letter Written by Mr. Rudyard Kipling for a Wounded Soldier.

LANCE-CORPORAL GEORGE HARRIS.
From a Photo. by F. H. Robinson, Chichester.

This is a very interesting letter. It was written by Mr. Rudyard Kipling at the dictation of the gallant soldier whose portrait appears above, when the latter, who had lost his arm in the fight at Paardeberg, was a patient in the hospital train, in which Mr. Kipling was also a passenger. George Harris was naturally anxious to write home, and as Mr. Kipling offered to act as his secretary, the wounded soldier's mother had the two-fold satisfaction of receiving a letter from her son written by the hand of the distinguished author, between whom and Tommy Atkins there are so many links of strong regard. This treasure she would not part with at any price, but we obtained the right to reproduce it here, the sum paid for so doing being devoted to the War Fund. The above portrait of Lance-Corporal Harris, who belongs to the Essex Regiment, was taken only a day or two before his departure for the front.

Feb. 24. 1900

Hospital Train going to Cape Town.

Dear Mother

I just a note to let you know I am getting on famous. I hope to be home soon. I was hit by a bullet in the right fore-arm at Paardeberg where we were fighting Cronje on Sunday the 18th, and they had to take it off below the elbow they have made a famous job of it I have no pain and I am eating heartily. It will be quite easy to stump a hand on to the stump we had three days in bullock-carts after we were wounded, coming in 30 miles to Modder river where the Hospital train picked us up yesterday evening we are all very comfortable and hope to be on the way home before long. You must not worry about me as I am really all right. I am lying in bed smoking a cigar and dictating this letter with much love I am your affectionate son

George

(Dictated RK) The above statements are true. Your son is coming on very well.

Rudyard Kipling

A Tragedy of the Sea.

By Gerald Halford.

[*From Photographs by Charles Clarke, Aldeburgh.*]

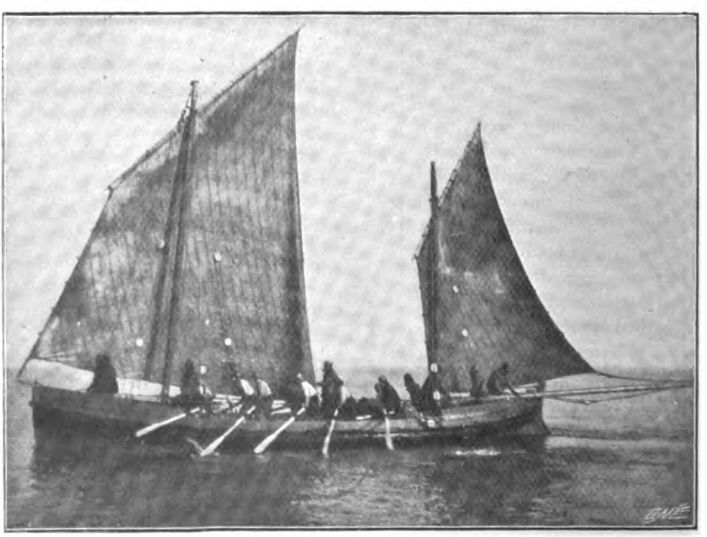
THE wind is blowing dead on the shore of Aldeburgh from the east, and the white crests of the long waves as they chase each other to their death on the steep, shingly beach make lines almost exactly parallel with the coast-line. Battalions of dark clouds scud swiftly across the dull-grey sky. On the parade and the beach there is little life. The sea is too rough for fishing, and the weather is not inviting for aimless strolling. A few sailors are gathered at each of the two look-outs, and an occasional fisherman may be seen standing by his boat. The date is Dec. 7, '99.

Suddenly a change comes over the scene. From their station near the southern look-out two men of the coastguard come out and send up a rocket. The report of the charge that sends the rocket on its journey is followed by the louder report of the rocket as it bursts in the air. A second rocket is sent up immediately afterwards.

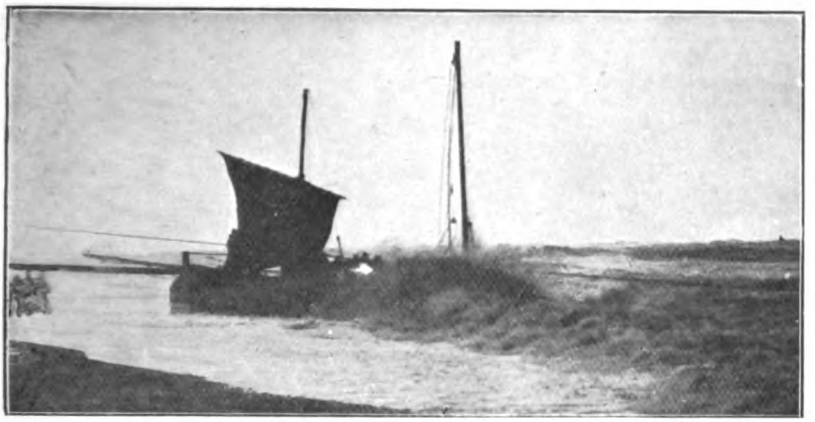
This is the well-known signal that calls out the lifeboat men. At the sound the little town wakes to life, much as the palace of the sleeping princess in Tennyson's poem wakes to life at the kiss of the prince. All is at once bustle and excitement. Along the parade there is a wild race of sailors from all directions to the lifeboat shed, where the belts—the cork life-belts that the crew wear—are kept. For the lifeboat has no regular crew, but is manned by volunteers, and whenever she goes out there is what is euphemistically termed by the local Press a "competition" for the belts—that is, a race and a scramble to secure one. This is, perhaps, not an ideal system, but it is difficult to see how it could be improved upon without creating jealousy and ill-feeling, and it must be said that, however bad the weather may be, there are always more volunteers than are needed. The coxswain, it should be mentioned, has the right to take away the belt of any man he considers unfit to go, and transfer it to a more eligible candidate—obviously a necessary regulation. Of course, no man may go without a belt.

Others besides the sailors gather on the beach round the lifeboat. The whole population of the town—men, women, and children, all who can possibly spare the time from business or work—come hurrying from all directions, eager to assist in the launch, or at least to witness it.

There is some delay in getting off the lifeboat. The regular coxswain, a man whose name is deservedly famous all over England, has been confined to his bed by sickness. But the sound of the lifeboat signal has been too much for him, and he is here, earnestly trying to persuade his medical adviser that he is fit to go with the boat. But the man of medicine is firm, and resolutely withholds his sanction, and as the deputy-coxswain is also incapacitated by illness, the command of the boat is entrusted to the bowman. Then there seems to be some doubt as to whether it is necessary for the boat to go at all. Telegrams are sent and received, and consultations are held. In the meantime the sailors who have been successful in securing belts stand complacently on the deck of the lifeboat chatting with their friends, and evidently much pleased with themselves. They little think that their success has meant in many cases their death-warrant.



THE ALDEBURGH LIFEBOAT CREW OUT FOR PRACTICE.



THE LIFEBOAT LEAVING THE SHORE IN THE HEAVY SURF.

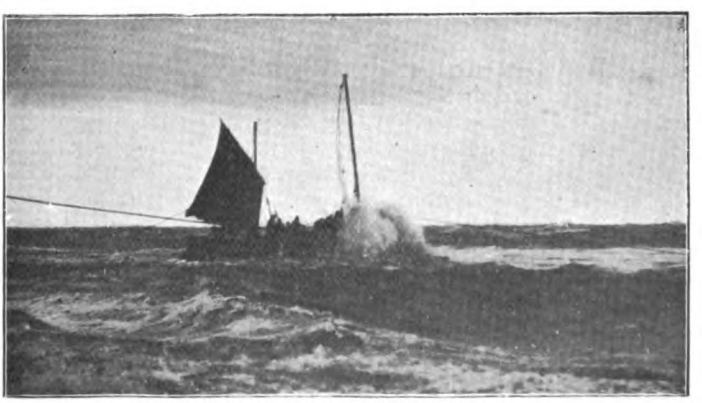
After a time the boat is got off. There is here no convenient harbour from which the boat can put off quietly into smooth water, or, if the wind is adverse, be towed out by a tug. She has to be dragged laboriously down the beach and pushed and hauled right into the breakers. And close to the shore there are two shoals—the inner and the outer shoal—which add greatly to the difficulty and danger of launching a boat in rough weather.

However, these difficulties and dangers have often before been overcome by the lifeboat men, and no special anxiety is felt on this occasion. The sea is certainly very rough, but the lifeboat has before now been out in even worse weather. It is true that the regular coxswain is not on board, but his substitute, the acting coxswain, is known to be a thoroughly competent and experienced man, with nerves of iron.

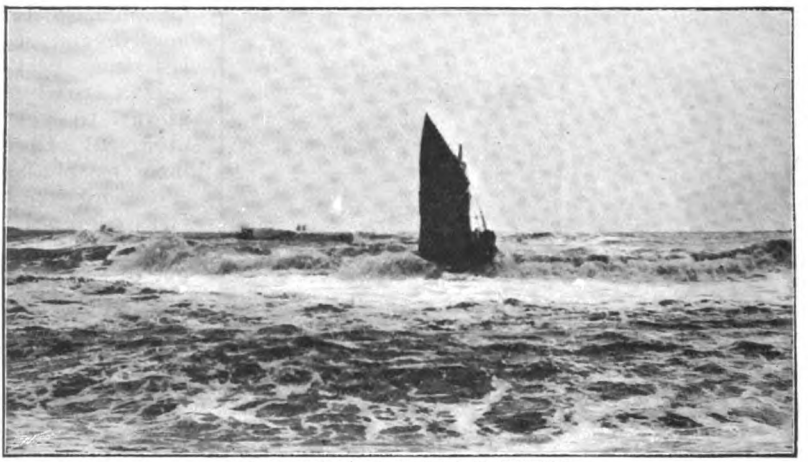
At last the boat is afloat with only her mizzen-sail set. The fact that the wind is blowing dead on to the land and the tide flowing strongly makes it difficult to head her out to sea, and for a time she drifts southward in the line of the breakers, perilously near the shore. Time after time does a great wave break against her bows, drenching the crew to the skin, and turning the boat's head to leeward, and time after time does the coxswain bring her back to her course, pointing as near to the wind as the boat will go. After a time the foresail also is hoisted, and at last the boat seems to be about to get clear of the breakers. She is crossing the inner shoal, pointing well out to sea, and many of the watchers turn away thinking that the worst of the danger is over. But their attention is quickly recalled by a terrible cry of horror and dismay from those who have remained. A great wave has struck the boat on her quarter. Before she has time to recover herself another, even larger, wave has caught her broadside on, breaking right on to her sail. In a moment the boat is capsized and disappears from view.

Then a dozen dark, indistinguishable figures are seen struggling in the breakers. They are tossed about like corks by the waves, for to such a sea the strongest man is but a plaything. They are rolled over and over by the billows, as if in mockery, flung ashore, and dragged back.

For a moment the spectators stand horror-struck and appalled. Then there is a frantic rush for the spot where the men are being thrown ashore. Every able-bodied man joins in it. There is no distinction of class or occupation. Seamen and landsmen, rich and poor, tradesmen, professional men, and working men, even women and boys—all assist. The boat has drifted some distance from her starting-point, and only those who



THE LIFEBOAT CROSSING THE SHOAL.



THE LIFEBOAT JUST BEFORE THE DISASTER.

have been following her along the shore have much chance of helping. But they are enough, and each body that is thrown ashore is promptly seized by eager hands before it can be dragged back by the back-wash, and hauled up the beach out of danger. And this is no light task, for the weight of an insensible man with heavy clothes saturated with water is something amazing.

A dozen men are rescued, and no more are to be seen in the water. The men are in a piteous plight, as may well be imagined. There are nearly all utterly exhausted—their faces cut and bruised by the shingle—some of them insensible. Medical aid is at hand, and the sufferers, carefully tended by willing helpers, all eventually recover, though some of them cause their friends an anxious half-hour. The acting coxswain is among the first to come ashore, and quickly recovers himself. He has shown the most striking courage and coolness throughout, and it is afterwards reported that when in the water he called out to the man nearest to him, "Don't muddle yourself! We shall get to shore all right." He now rises and runs down to the water to help to rescue the rest of the crew. He is so exhausted that he can hardly stand, and he falls down on the way, but he picks himself up again and rushes into the water. Such conduct is beyond all praise. No words could do justice to it.

Twelve men are ashore and alive; six remain to be accounted for. Where are they? The lifeboat has by this time come ashore, and is lying, keel uppermost, on the edge of the breakers. The dreadful truth is clear. The missing men are *under the lifeboat!*

At this point the tragedy may be said to reach its climax. The scene is one that it is absolutely impossible to describe. The men are known to be there, under the boat, within a few feet of a crowd of men eager to take any trouble or risk to save them, and yet nobody seems to know what to do. And, as a matter of fact, there is nothing to be done. The lifeboat weighs thirteen tons, and to lever her side up or to turn her over is for the present equally impossible. To dig away the shingle from under her is quite useless while the tide is still flowing and the waves are breaking almost on to her. In the meantime the men under her, if not dead, must be rapidly dying, and the spectators grow desperate. Women and girls—mothers, sisters, and daughters of the victims, or merely sympathetic friends—are weeping and sobbing in the most heart-rending fashion. Some go into hysterics and have to be taken away; others faint outright. Even strong men are seen to go apart from the crowd and turn their heads away.

At this time occurs perhaps the most dramatic incident of the day. Before the lifeboat finally settles down a wave slightly lifts the side nearest to the sea, and in the back-wash a body floats out. It is that of a quite young fellow, married little more than a year ago, and the father of a three-months-old baby. It is at once secured and the treatment for the restoration of the apparently drowned applied. There is a report that the man is still alive, the spectators being probably misled by the muscular movements caused by the artificial respiration. It is soon evident that life has gone for ever, and a sad little procession takes the corpse home.

Meanwhile desperate attempts are made to rescue the five men remaining under the boat. The regular coxswain is by this time on the scene, and, though he ought to be in bed, is in the water, directing operations. The acting coxswain and the local secretary to the Lifeboat Institution are with him, and there is no lack of eager volunteer helpers. Attempts are made to drag the boat up the beach; failing that, to lift her side up with

MILLER WARD.
(Drowned.)
From a Photo. by Clarke & Son, Aldeburgh.

TOM MORRIS.
(Drowned.)
From a Photo. by Clarke & Son.

HERBERT DOWNING.
(Drowned.)
From a Photo. by Clarke & Son.

CHARLES CRISP.
(Drowned.)
From a Photo. by Clarke & Son.

WALTER WARD.
(Drowned.)
From a Photo. by Clarke & Son.

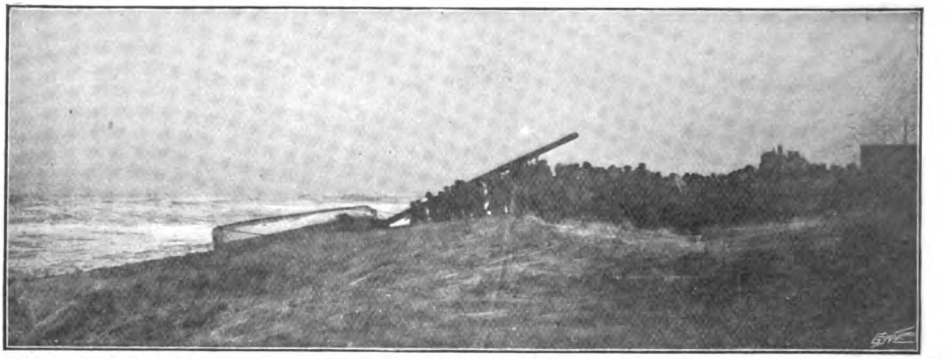
JOHN BUTCHER.
(Drowned.)
From a Photo. by Clarke & Son.

ALLEN EASTER.
(Rescued from the sea, but died of his injuries.)
From a Photo. by Clarke & Son.

CHARLES WARD.
(Acting-Coxswain of the lifeboat at the time of the disaster—Save 1.)
From a Photo. by Clarke & Son.

JAMES CABLE.
(The usual Coxswain, absent through illness.)
From a Photo. by Clarke & Son.

THE CREW OF THE WRECKED LIFEBOAT.



THE WRECK OF THE LIFEBOAT, WITH FIVE MEN BENEATH IT. THE CROWD ATTEMPTING TO RAISE THE BOAT WITH LEVERS.

levers; but they are useless. Efforts are made to find out whether the men under her are still alive. A few men bravely go into the water, and seizing hurried opportunities between the incursions of the waves, look under that side of her which is toward the sea, and under which the back-wash of the waves has scoured out a slight opening. They report that they can see the men, and some even imagine that they can hear them. The coxswain mounts on the boat, and, putting his mouth to the tube through which the water escapes when the boat is afloat, shouts "Are you there?"

There is a breathless silence, but no answer comes.

As a last resort it is resolved to break through the side of the lifeboat. This is no easy task, for a lifeboat is naturally built for solidity more than anything else, and to cut through her stout timbers is a matter of time and toil. But with axes and saws energetically wielded it is at last accomplished, and a great gap yawns in the side of the boat.

And then it is found to be quite useless. The bodies cannot be reached. The deck of the boat under which the men are lying—in a space that cannot be more than 2ft. high—intervenes.

Then the original plan is reverted to. Huge pieces of timber are brought and used as levers, and as the tide goes down it is at last found possible to lift the edge of the boat sufficiently to enable the bodies to be extricated, though this is not till after darkness has set in. None of the five is missing, and the scene as each body is taken out and identified is truly pitiful. The two last to be brought out are the two oldest men in the crew, found lying together with their heads badly injured, no doubt—and there is some comfort in this thought—killed instantaneously when the boat was capsized, or when she came ashore. In fact, it seems fairly certain that none of the six was alive, or at least conscious, after the lifeboat was thrown upon the beach.

Sadly and solemnly, "by the struggling moonbeams' misty light and the lantern dimly burning," the bodies are taken home.

It is a terrible tragedy. Immense pity is felt in the town for all concerned—for the dead men, for their families, for the lifeboat officials and crew. There is deep gloom, but—let us record it with thankfulness—there is no anger, no bitterness. It is recognised that no one is to blame. The officials were undoubtedly justified in letting the boat go out, and no act of carelessness or incompetence can be imputed to the acting coxswain or the crew. And, after the accident, everything possible was done by everybody concerned—and everybody not concerned—to rescue the crew. As the crowd disperse they can only say gloomily to each other: "A sad day for the town." But it is a day of which the town has no need to be ashamed!

THE END OF THE LIFEBOAT.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY. ASTOR, LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

The Brass Bottle.

By F. Anstey.

Author of "Vice-Versâ," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MESSENGER OF HOPE.

JESSIE, the neat and pretty parlourmaid, opened the door with a smile of welcome which Horace found reassuring. No girl, he thought, whose master had suddenly been transformed into a mule could possibly smile like that. The Professor, she told him, was not at home, which again was comforting. For a *savant*, however careless about his personal appearance, would scarcely venture to brave public opinion in the semblance of a quadruped.

"Is the Professor out?" he inquired, to make sure.

"Not exactly out, sir," said the maid, "but particularly engaged, working hard in his study, and not to be disturbed on no account."

This was encouraging, too, since a mule could hardly engage in literary labour of any kind. Evidently the Jinnee must either have over-rated his supernatural powers, or else have been deliberately amusing himself at Horace's expense.

"Then I will see Miss Futvoye," he said.

"Miss Sylvia is with the master, sir," said the girl; "but if you'll come into the drawing-room I'll let Mrs. Futvoye know you are here."

He had not been in the drawing-room long before Mrs. Futvoye appeared, and one glance at her face confirmed Ventimore's worst fears. Outwardly she was calm enough, but it was only too obvious that her calmness was the result of severe self-repression; her eyes, usually so shrewdly and placidly observant, had a haggard and hunted look; her ears seemed on the strain to catch some distant sound.

"I hardly thought we should see you to-day," she began, in a tone of studied reserve; "but perhaps you came to offer some explanation of the extraordinary manner in which you thought fit to entertain us last night? If so——"

"The fact is," said Horace, looking into his hat, "I came because I was rather anxious about the Professor."

"About my husband?" said the poor lady, with a really heroic effort to appear surprised. "He is—as well as could be expected. Why should you suppose otherwise?" she added, with a flash of suspicion.

"I fancied perhaps that—that he mightn't be quite himself to-day," said Horace, with his eyes on the carpet.

"I see," said Mrs. Futvoye, regaining her composure; "you were afraid that all those foreign dishes might not have agreed with him. But—except that he is a little irritable this afternoon—he is much as usual."

"I'm delighted to hear it," said Horace, with reviving hope. "Do you think he would see me for a moment?"

"Great heavens, no!" cried Mrs. Futvoye, with an irrepressible start; "I mean," she explained, "that, after what took place last night, Anthony—my husband—very properly feels that an interview would be too painful."

"But when we parted he was perfectly friendly."

"I can only say," replied the courageous woman, "that you would find him considerably altered now."

Horace had no difficulty in believing it.

"At least, I may see Sylvia?" he pleaded.

"No," said Mrs. Futvoye; "I really can't have Sylvia disturbed just now. She is very busy, helping her father. Anthony has to read a paper at one of his societies to-morrow night, and she is writing it out from his dictation."

If any departure from strict truth can ever be excusable, this surely was one; unfortunately, just then Sylvia herself burst into the room.

"Mother," she cried, without seeing Horace in her agitation, "do come to papa, quick! He has just begun kicking again, and I can't manage him alone. . . . . Oh, *you* here?" she broke off, as she saw who was in the room. "Why do you come here now, Horace? Please, *please* go away! Papa is rather unwell—nothing serious, only—oh, *do* go away!"

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"'MOTHER,' SHE CRIED, 'DO COME TO PAPA, QUICK.'"

"Darling!" said Horace, going to her and taking both her hands, "I know all—do you understand?—*all!*"

"Mamma!" cried Sylvia, reproachfully, "have you told him—already? When we settled that even Horace wasn't to know till—till papa recovers!"

"My dear," replied her mother, "I have told him nothing; he can't possibly know, unless—but no, that isn't possible. And, after all," she added, with a warning glance at her daughter, "I don't know why we should make any mystery about a mere attack of gout. But I had better go and see if your father wants anything." And she hurried out of the room.

Sylvia sat down and gazed silently into the fire. "I daresay you don't know how dreadfully people kick when they've got gout," she remarked, presently.

"Oh, yes, I do," said Horace, sympathetically; "at least, I can guess."

"Especially when it's in both legs," continued Sylvia.

"Or," said Horace, gently, "in all four."

"Ah, you *do* know!" cried Sylvia. "Then it's all the more horrid of you to come!"

"Dearest," said Horace, "is not this just the time when my place should be near you—and him?"

"Not near papa, Horace!" she put in, anxiously; "it wouldn't be at all safe."

"Do you really think I have any fear for myself?"

"Are you sure you quite know—what he is like now?"

"I understand," said Horace, trying to put it as considerately as possible, "that a casual observer, who didn't know your father, might mistake him, at first sight, for—for some sort of quadruped."

"He's a mule," sobbed Sylvia, breaking down entirely. "I could bear it better if he had been a *nice* mule. . . . B—but he isn't!"

"Whatever he may be," declared Horace, as he knelt by her chair endeavouring to comfort her, "nothing can alter my profound respect for him. And you must let me see him, Sylvia; because I fully believe I shall be able to cheer him up."

"If you imagine you can persuade him to—to laugh it off!" said Sylvia, tearfully.

"I wasn't proposing to try to make him see the humorous side of his situation," Horace mildly explained. "I trust I have more tact than that. But he may be glad to know that, at the worst, it is only a temporary inconvenience. I'll take care that he's all right again before very long."

She started up and looked at him: her

eyes widened with dawning dread and mistrust.

"If you can speak like that," she said, "it must have been *you* who—no, I can't believe it—that would be too horrible!"

"I who did *what*, Sylvia? Weren't you there when—when it happened?"

"No," she replied; "I was only told of it afterwards. Mother heard papa talking loudly in his study this morning, as if he was angry with somebody, and at last she grew so uneasy she couldn't bear it any longer, and went in to see what was the matter with him. Dad was quite alone, and looked as usual, only a little excited—and then, without the slightest warning, just as she entered the room, he—he changed slowly into a mule before her eyes! Anybody but mamma would have lost her head and roused the whole house."

"Thank Heaven she didn't!" said Horace, fervently. "That was what I was most afraid of."

"Then—oh, Horace, it *was* you! It's no use denying it. I feel more certain of it every moment!"

"Now, Sylvia!" he protested, still anxious, if possible, to keep the worst from her, "what could have put such an idea into your head?"

"I don't know," she said, slowly. "Several things last night. No one who was really nice, and like everybody else, would live in queer rooms like those, and dine on cushions, with dreadful black slaves, and—and dancing girls and things. You pretended you were quite poor."

"So I am, darling. And as for the rooms, and—and the rest, they're all gone, Sylvia. If you went to Vincent Square to-day, you wouldn't find a trace of them!"

"That only shows!" said Sylvia. "But why should you play such a cruel, and—and ungentlemanly trick on poor dad? If you had ever really loved me——!"

"But I do. Sylvia, you can't really believe me capable of such an outrage! Look at me and tell me so."

"No, Horace," said Sylvia, frankly. "I don't believe *you* did it. But I believe you know who *did*. And you had better tell me at once!"

"If you're quite sure you can stand it," he replied, "I'll tell you everything." And, as briefly as possible, he told her how he had unsealed the brass bottle, and all that had come of it.

She bore it, on the whole, better than he had expected; perhaps, being a woman, it was some consolation to her to remind him that she had foretold something of this kind from the very first.

"But, of course, I never really thought it would be so awful as this!" she said. "Horace, how *could* you be so careless as to let a great wicked thing like that escape out of its bottle?"

"I had a notion it was a manuscript," said Horace—"till he came out. But he isn't a great wicked thing, Sylvia. He's an amiable old Jinnee enough. And he'd do anything for me. Nobody could be more grateful and generous than he has been."

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"SYLVIA, YOU CAN'T REALLY BELIEVE ME CAPABLE OF SUCH AN OUTRAGE!"

"Do you call it generous to change the poor, dear dad into a mule?" inquired Sylvia, with a little curl of her upper lip.

"That was an oversight," said Horace; "he meant no harm by it. In Arabia they do these things—or used to in his day. Not that that's much excuse for him. Still, he's not so young as he was, and besides, being bottled up for all those centuries must have narrowed him rather. You must try and make allowances for him, darling."

"I sha'n't," said Sylvia, "unless he apologizes to poor father, and puts him right at once."

"Why, of course, he'll do that," Horace answered, confidently. "I'll see that he does. I don't mean to stand any more of his nonsense. I'm afraid I've been just a little too slack for fear of hurting his feelings; but this time he's gone too far, and I shall talk to him like a Dutch uncle. He's always ready to do the right thing when he's once shown where he has gone wrong—only he takes such a lot of showing, poor old chap!"

"But when do you think he'll—do the right thing?"

"Oh, as soon as I see him again."

"Yes, but when *will* you see him again?"

"That's more than I can say. He's away just now—in China, or Peru, or somewhere."

"Horace! Then he won't be back for months and months!"

"Oh, yes, he will. He can do the whole trip, *aller et retour*, you know, in a few hours. He's an active old beggar for his age. In the meantime, dearest, the chief thing is to keep up your father's spirits. So I think I'd better ——I was just telling Sylvia, Mrs. Futvoye," he said, as that lady re-entered the room, "that I should like to see the Professor at once."

"It's quite, *quite* impossible!" was the nervous reply. "He's in such a state that he's unable to see anyone. You don't know how fractious gout makes him!"

"Dear Mrs. Futvoye," said Horace, "believe me, I know more than you suppose."

"Yes, mother, dear," put in Sylvia; "he knows everything—*really* everything. And perhaps it might do dad good to see him."

Mrs. Futvoye sank helplessly down on a settee. "Oh, *dear* me!" she said. "I don't know *what* to say. I really don't. If you had seen him plunge at the mere suggestion of a doctor!"

Privately, though naturally he could not say so, Horace thought a vet. might be more appropriate, but eventually he persuaded Mrs. Futvoye to conduct him to her husband's study.

"Anthony, love," she said, as she knocked gently at the door, "I've brought Horace Ventimore to see you for a few moments, if he may." It seemed from the sounds of furious snorting and stamping within that the Professor resented this intrusion on his privacy. "My dear Anthony," said his devoted wife, as she unlocked the door and turned the key on the inside after admitting Horace, "try to be calm. Think of the servants downstairs. Horace is *so* anxious to help."

"MOST OF THE LIGHTER FURNITURE HAD BEEN ALREADY REDUCED TO MATCHWOOD."

As for Ventimore, he was speechless—so inexpressibly shocked was he by the alteration in the Professor's appearance. He had never seen a mule in sorrier condition or in so vicious a temper. Most of the lighter furniture had been already reduced to matchwood; the glass doors of

the bookcase were starred or shivered; precious Egyptian pottery and glass were strewn in fragments on the carpet, and even the mummy, though it still smiled with the same enigmatic cheerfulness, seemed to have suffered severely from the Professorial hoofs.

Horace instinctively felt that any words of conventional sympathy would jar here; indeed, the Professor's attitude and expression reminded him irresistibly of a certain "Blondin Donkey" he had seen enacted by music-hall artists, at the stage when it becomes sullen and defiant. Only, he had laughed helplessly at the Blondin Donkey, and somehow he felt no inclination to laugh now.

"Believe me, sir," he began, "I would not disturb you like this unless—steady there, for Heaven's sake, Professor, don't kick till you've heard me out!" For the mule, in a clumsy, shambling way which betrayed the novice, was slowly revolving on his own axis so as to bring his hind-quarters into action, while still keeping his only serviceable eye upon his unwelcome visitor.

"Listen to me, sir," said Horace, manœuvring in his turn. "I'm not to blame for this, and if you brain me, as you seem to be endeavouring to do, you'll simply destroy the only living man who can get you out of this."

The mule appeared impressed by this, and backed cumbrously into a corner, from which he regarded Horace with a mistrustful, but attentive, eye. "If, as I imagine, sir," continued Horace, "you are, though temporarily deprived of speech, perfectly capable of following an argument, will you kindly signify it by raising your right ear?" The mule's right ear rose with a sharp twitch.

"Now we can get on," said Horace. "First let me tell you that I repudiate all responsibility for the proceedings of that infernal Jinnee . . . I wouldn't stamp like that—you might go through the floor, you know . . . Now, if you will only exercise a little patience——"

At this the exasperated animal made a sudden run at him with his mouth open, which obliged Horace to shelter himself behind a large leather arm-chair. "You really *must* keep cool, sir," he remonstrated; "your nerves are naturally upset. If I might suggest a little champagne—you could manage it in—in a bucket, and it would help you to pull yourself together. A whisk of your—er—tail would imply consent." The Professor's tail instantly swept some rare Arabian glass lamps and vases from a shelf at his rear, whereupon Mrs. Futvoye went out, and returned presently with a bottle of champagne and a large china *jardinière*, as the best substitute she could find for a bucket.

When the mule had drained the flower-pot greedily and appeared refreshed Horace proceeded: "I have every hope, sir," he said, "that before many hours you will be smiling—pray don't prance like that, I mean what I say—smiling over what now seems to you, very justly, a most annoying and serious catastrophe. I shall speak seriously to Fakrash (the Jinnee, you know), and I am sure that, as soon as he realizes what a frightful blunder he has made, he will be the first to offer you every reparation in his power. For, old foozle as he is, he's thoroughly good-hearted."

The Professor drooped his ears at this, and shook his head with a doleful incredulity that made him look more like the Pantomime Donkey than ever.

"I think I understand him fairly well by this time, sir," said Horace, "and I'll answer for it that there's no real harm in him. I give you my word of honour that, if you'll only remain quiet and leave everything to me, you shall very soon be released from this absurd position. That's all I came to tell you, and now I won't trouble you any longer. If you *could* bring yourself, as a sign that you bear me no ill-feeling, to give me your—your off-foreleg at parting, I——"

But the Professor turned his back in so pointed and ominous a manner that Horace judged it better to withdraw without insisting further. "I'm afraid," he said to Mrs. Futvoye, after they had rejoined Sylvia in the drawing-room—"I'm afraid your husband is still a little sore with me about this miserable business."

"I don't know what else you can expect," replied the lady, rather tartly; "he can't help feeling—as we all must and do, after what you said just now—that, but for you, this would never have happened!"

"If you mean it was all through my attending that sale," said Horace, "you might remember that I only went there at the Professor's request. You know that, Sylvia."

"Yes, Horace," said Sylvia; "but papa never asked you to buy a hideous brass bottle with a nasty Genius in it. And anyone with ordinary common sense would have kept it properly corked!"

"What, you against me too, Sylvia!" cried Horace, cut to the quick.

"No, Horace, never against you. I didn't mean to say what I did. Only it *is* such a relief to put the blame on somebody. I know, I *know* you feel it almost as much as we do. But so long as poor, dear papa remains as he is we can never be anything to one another. You must see that, Horace!"

"Yes, I see that," he said; "but, trust me, Sylvia, he shall *not* remain as he is. I swear he shall not. In another day or two, at the outside, you will see him his own self once more. And then—oh, darling, darling, you won't let anything or anybody separate us? Promise me that!"

He would have held her in his arms, but she kept him at a distance. "When papa is himself again," she said, "I shall know better what to say. I can't promise anything now, Horace."

Horace recognised that no appeal would draw a more definite answer from her just then; so he took his leave, with the feeling that, after all, matters must improve before very long, and in the meantime he must bear the suspense with patience.

He got through dinner as well as he could in his own rooms, for he did not like to go to his club lest the Jinnee should suddenly return during his absence.

"THE MULE DRAINED THE FLOWER-POT GREEDILY."

"If he wants me he'd be quite equal to coming on to the club after me," he reflected, "for he has about as much sense of the fitness of things as Mary's lamb. I shouldn't care about seeing him suddenly bursting through the floor of the smoking-room. Nor would the committee."

He sat up late, in the hope that Fakrash would appear; but the Jinnee made no sign, and Horace began to get uneasy. "I wish there was some way of ringing him up," he thought. "If he were only the slave of a ring or a lamp, I'd rub it; but it wouldn't be any use to rub that bottle—and, besides, he isn't a slave. Probably he has a suspicion

that he has not exactly distinguished himself over his latest feat, and thinks it prudent to keep out of my way for the present. But if he fancies he'll make things any better for himself by that he'll find himself mistaken."

It was maddening to think of the unhappy Professor still fretting away hour after hour in the uncongenial form of a mule, waiting impatiently for the relief that never came. If it lingered much longer he might actually starve, unless his family thought of getting in some oats for him, and he could be prevailed upon to touch them. And how much longer could they succeed in concealing the nature of his affliction? How long before all Kensington and the whole civilized world would know that one of the leading Orientalists in Europe was restlessly prancing on four legs around his study in Cottesmore Gardens?

Racked by speculations such as these, Ventimore lay awake till well into the small hours, when he dropped off into troubled dreams that, wild as they were, could not be more grotesquely fantastic than the realities to which they were the alternative.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CHOICE OF EVILS.

NOT even his morning tub could brace Ventimore's spirits to their usual cheerfulness. After sending away his breakfast almost untasted he stood at his window, looking drearily out over the crude green turf of Vincent Square at the indigo masses of the Abbey and the Victoria Tower and the huge gasometers to the right which loomed faintly through a dun-coloured haze.

He felt a positive loathing for his office, to which he had gone with such high hopes and enthusiasm of late. There was no work for him to do there any longer, and the sight of his drawing-table and materials would, he knew, be intolerable in their mute mockery.

Nor could he with any decency present himself again at Cottesmore Gardens while the situation still remained unchanged, as it must do until he had seen Fakrash.

When would the Jinnee return, or—horrible suspicion!—did he never intend to return at all?

"Fakrash!" he groaned aloud, "you *can't* really mean to leave me in such a regular deuce of a hole as this?"

"At thy service!" said a well-known voice behind him, and he turned to see the Jinnee standing smiling on the hearthrug—and at this accomplishment of his dearest desire all his indignation surged back, irrationally enough.

"Oh, *there* you are!" he said, irritably. "Where on earth have you been all this time?"

"Nowhere on earth," was the bland reply; "but in the regions of the air, seeking to promote thy welfare."

"If you have been as brilliantly successful up there as you have down here," retorted Horace, "I have much to thank you for."

"I am more than repaid," answered the Jinnee, who, like many most estimable persons, was almost impervious to irony, "by such assurances of thy gratitude."

"I'm *not* grateful," said Horace, fuming. "I'm terribly annoyed!"

"Well hath it been written," replied the Jinnee:—

> Be disregardful of thine affairs, and commit them to the course of Fate,
> For often a thing that enrages thee may eventually be to thee pleasing.

"I don't see the remotest chance of that in my case," said Horace.

"Why is thy countenance thus troubled, and what new complaint hast thou against me?"

"What the deuce do you mean by turning a distinguished and perfectly inoffensive scholar into a wall-eyed mule?" Horace broke out. "If that is your idea of a practical joke——!"

"It is one of the easiest affairs possible," said the Jinnee, complacently running his fingers through the thin strands of his beard. "I have accomplished such transformations on several occasions."

"Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself, that's all. The question is now—how do you propose to restore him again?"

"Far from undoing be that which is accomplished!" was the sententious answer.

"What?" cried Horace, hardly believing his ears; "you surely don't mean to allow that unhappy Professor to remain like that for ever, do you?"

"None can alter what is predestined."

"Very likely not. But it wasn't decreed that a learned man should be suddenly degraded to a beastly mule for the rest of his life. Destiny wouldn't be such a fool!"

"Despise not mules, for they are useful and valuable animals in the household."

"But, confound it all, have you no imagination? Can't you enter at all into the feelings of a man—a man of wide learning and reputation—suddenly plunged into such a humiliating condition?"

"THE QUESTION IS NOW—HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO RESTORE HIM AGAIN?"

"Upon his own head be it," said Fakrash, coldly. "For he hath brought this fate upon himself."

"Well, how do you suppose that you have helped *me* by this performance? Will it make him any the more disposed to consent to my marrying his daughter? Is that all you know of the world?"

"It is not my intention that thou shouldest take his daughter to wife."

"Whether you approve or not, it's my intention to marry her."

"Assuredly she will not marry thee so long as her father remaineth a mule."

"There I agree with you. But is that your notion of doing me a good turn?"

"I did not consider thy interest in this matter."

"Then will you be good enough to consider it now? I have pledged my word that he shall be restored to his original form. Not only my happiness is at stake, but my honour."

"By failure to perform the impossible none can lose honour. And this is a thing that cannot be undone."

"Cannot be undone?" repeated Horace, feeling a cold clutch at his heart. "Why?"

"Because," said the Jinnee, sullenly, "I have forgotten the way."

"Nonsense!" retorted Horace; "I don't believe it. Why," he urged, descending to flattery, "you're such a clever old Johnny—I beg your pardon, I meant, such a clever old *Jinnee*—you can do anything, if you only give your mind to it. Just look at the way you changed this house back again to what it was. Marvellous!"

"That was the veriest trifle," said Fakrash, though he was obviously pleased by this tribute to his talent; "this would be a different affair altogether."

"But child's play to *you!*" insinuated Horace. "Come, you know very well you can do it if you only choose."

"It may be as thou sayest. But I do not choose."

"Then I think," said Horace, "that, considering the obligation you admit yourself you are under to me, I have a right to know the reason — the *real* reason—why you refuse."

"Thy claim is not without justice," answered the Jinnee, after a pause, "nor can I decline to gratify thee."

"That's right," cried Horace; "I knew you'd see it in the proper light when it was once put to you. Now, don't lose any more time, but restore that unfortunate man at once, as you've promised."

"Not so," said the Jinnee; "I promised thee a reason for my refusal—and that thou shalt have. Know then, O my son, that this indiscreet one had, by some vile and unhallowed arts, divined the hidden meaning of what was written upon the seal of the bottle wherein I was confined, and was preparing to reveal the same unto all men."

"What would it matter to you if he did?"

"Much—for the writing contained a false and lying record of my actions."

"If it is all lies, it can't do you any harm. Why not treat them with the contempt they deserve?"

"They are not *all* lies," the Jinnee admitted, reluctantly.

"Well, never mind. Whatever you've done, you've expiated it by this time."

"Now that Suleyman is no more it is my desire to seek out my kinsmen of the Green Jinn, and live out my days in amity and honour. How can that be if they hear my name execrated by all mortals?"

"Nobody would think of execrating you about an affair three thousand years old. It's too stale a scandal."

"Thou speakest without understanding. I tell thee that if men knew but the half of my misdoings," said Fakrash, in a tone not altogether free from a kind of sombre complacency, "the noise of them would rise even unto the uppermost regions, and scorn and loathing would be my portion."

"Oh, it's not so bad as all that," said Horace, who had a private impression that the Jinnee's "past" would probably turn out to be chiefly made up of peccadilloes. "But, anyway, I'm sure the Professor will readily agree to keep silence about it; and, as you have, of course, got the seal in your own possession again——"

"Nay, the seal is still in his possession, and it is naught to me where it is deposited," said Fakrash, "since the only mortal who hath deciphered it is now a dumb animal."

"Not at all," said Horace. "There are several friends of his who could decipher that inscription quite as easily as he did."

"Is this the truth?" said the Jinnee, in visible alarm.

"Certainly," said Horace. "Within the last quarter of a century archæology has made great strides. Our learned men can now read Babylonian bricks and Chaldean tablets as easily as if they were advertisements on galvanized iron. You may think you've been extremely clever in turning the Professor into an animal, but you'll probably find you've only made another mistake."

"How so?" inquired Fakrash.

"Well," said Horace, seeing his advantage, and pushing it unscrupulously, "now that, in your infinite wisdom, you have ordained that he should be a mule, he naturally can't possess property. Therefore all his effects will have to be sold, and amongst them will be that seal of yours, which, like many other things in his collection, will probably be bought up by the British Museum, where it will be examined and commented upon by every Orientalist in Europe. I suppose you've thought of all that?"

"O young man of marvellous sagacity!" said the Jinnee; "truly I had omitted to consider these things, and thou hast opened my eyes in time. For I will present myself unto this man-mule and adjure him to reveal where he hath bestowed this seal, so that I may regain it."

"He can't do that, you know, so long as he remains a mule."

"I will endow him with speech for the purpose."

"Let me tell you this," said Horace: "he's in a very nasty temper just now, naturally enough, and you won't get anything out of him until you have restored him to human form. If you do that, he'll agree to anything."

"Whether I restore him or not will depend not on me, but on the damsel who is his daughter, and to whom thou art contracted in marriage. For first of all I must speak with her."

"So long as I am present and you promise not to play any tricks," said Horace, "I've no objection, for I believe, if you once saw her and heard her plead for her poor father, you wouldn't have the heart to hold out any longer. But you must give me your word that you'll behave yourself."

"'WILL THIS SATISFY THEE?' INQUIRED THE JINNEE."

"Thou hast it," said the Jinnee; "I do but desire to see her on thine account."

"Very well," agreed Horace; "but I really can't introduce you in that turban—she'd be terrified. Couldn't you contrive to get yourself up in commonplace English clothes, just for once—something that wouldn't attract so much attention?"

"Will this satisfy thee?" inquired the Jinnee, as his green turban and flowing robes suddenly resolved themselves into the con-

ventional chimney-pot hat, frock-coat, and trousers of modern civilization.

He bore a painful resemblance in them to the kind of elderly gentleman who comes on in the harlequinade to be bonneted by the clown; but Horace was in no mood to be critical just then.

"That's better," he said, encouragingly; "much better. Now," he added, as he led the way to the hall and put on his own hat and overcoat, "we'll go out and find a hansom and be at Kensington in less than twenty minutes."

"We shall be there in less than twenty seconds," said the Jinnee, seizing him by the arm above the elbow, and Horace found himself suddenly carried up into the air and people skimming over the chimney-pots like amateur rooks."

"Trouble not for that," said Fakrash, "for no mortal eyes are capable of following our flight."

"I hope not," said Horace, "or I shall lose any reputation I have left. I think," he added, "I'd better go in alone first and prepare them, if you won't mind waiting outside. I'll come to the window and wave my pocket-handkerchief when they're ready. And *do* come in by the door like an ordinary person, and ask the maidservant if you may see me."

"HORACE WAS SET DOWN GASPING WITH SURPRISE AND WANT OF BREATH."

set down, gasping with surprise and want of breath, on the pavement opposite the Futvoyes' door.

"I should just like to observe," he said, as soon as he could speak, "that if we've been seen, we shall probably cause a sensation. Londoners are not accustomed to seeing

"I will bear it in mind," answered the Jinnee, and suddenly sank, or seemed to sink, through a chink in the pavement.

Horace, after ringing at the Futvoyes' door, was admitted and shown into the drawing-room, where Sylvia presently came to him, looking as lovely as ever, in spite of

the pallor due to sleeplessness and anxiety. "It is kind of you to call and inquire," she said, with the unnatural calm of suppressed hysteria. "Dad is much the same this morning. He had a fairly good night, and was able to take part of a carrot for breakfast—but I'm afraid he's just remembered that he has to read a paper on 'Oriental Occultism' before the Asiatic Society this evening, and it's worrying him a little . . . . Oh, Horace!" she broke out, unexpectedly, "how perfectly awful all this is! How *are* we to bear it?"

"Don't give way, darling!" said Horace; "you will not have to bear it much longer."

"It's all very well, Horace, but unless something is done *soon* it will be too late. We can't go *on* keeping a mule in the study without the servants suspecting something, and where are we to put poor, dear papa? It's too ghastly to think of his having to be sent away to—to a Home of Rest for Horses—and yet what *is* to be done with him? . . . Why do you come if you can't do anything?"

"I shouldn't be here unless I could bring you good news. You remember what I told you about the Jinnee?"

"Remember!" cried Sylvia. "As if I could forget! Has he really come back, Horace?"

"Yes. I think I have brought him to see that he has made a foolish mistake in enchanting your unfortunate father, and he seems willing to undo it on certain conditions. He is somewhere within call at this moment, and will come in whenever I give the signal. But he wishes to speak to you first."

"To *me?* Oh, no, Horace!" exclaimed Sylvia, recoiling, "I'd so much rather not. I don't like things that have come out of brass bottles. I shouldn't know what to say, and it would frighten me horribly."

"You must be brave, darling!" said Horace. "Remember that it depends on you whether the Professor is to be restored or not. And there's nothing alarming about old Fakrash, either. I've got him to put on ordinary things, and he really doesn't look so bad in them. He's quite a mild, amiable old noodle, and he'll do anything for you, if you'll only stroke him down the right way. You *will* see him, won't you, for your father's sake?"

"If I must," said Sylvia, with a shudder, "I—I'll be as nice to him as I can."

Horace went to the window and gave the signal, though there was no one in sight. However, it was evidently seen, for the next moment there was a resounding blow at the front door, and a little later Jessie, the parlourmaid, announced, "Mr. Fatrasher Larmash—to see Mr. Ventimore," and the Jinnee stalked gravely in, with his tall hat on his head.

"You are probably not aware of it, sir," said Horace, "but it is the custom here to uncover in the presence of a lady." The Jinnee removed his hat with both hands, and stood silent and impassive.

"Let me present you to Miss Sylvia Futvoye," Ventimore continued, "the lady whose name you have already heard."

There was a momentary gleam in Fakrash's odd, slanting eyes as they lighted on Sylvia's shrinking figure, but he made no acknowledgment of the introduction.

"The damsel is not without comeliness," he remarked to Horace; "but there are lovelier far than she."

"I didn't ask you for either criticisms or comparisons," said Ventimore, sharply; "there is nobody in the world equal to Miss Futvoye, in my opinion, and you will be good enough to remember that fact. She is exceedingly distressed (as any dutiful daughter would be) by the cruel and senseless trick you have played her father, and she begs that you will rectify it at once. Don't you, Sylvia?"

"Yes, indeed!" said Sylvia, almost in a whisper, "if—if it isn't troubling you too much!"

"I have been turning over thy words in my mind," said Fakrash to Horace, still ignoring Sylvia, "and I am convinced that thou art right. Even if the contents of the seal were known of all men they would raise no clamour about affairs that concern them not. Therefore it is nothing to me in whose hands the seal may be. Dost thou not agree with me in this?"

"Of course I do," said Horace. "And it naturally follows that——"

"It naturally follows, as thou sayeth," said the Jinnee, with a cunning assumption of indifference, "that I have naught to gain by demanding back the seal as the price of restoring this damsel's father to his original form. Wherefore, so far as I am concerned, let him remain a mule for ever; unless, indeed, thou art ready to comply with my conditions."

"Conditions!" cried Horace, utterly unprepared for this conclusion. "What can you possibly want from me? But state them. I'll agree to anything, in reason!"

"'THE DAMSEL IS NOT WITHOUT COMELINESS,' HE REMARKED TO HORACE."

"I demand that thou should'st renounce the hand of this damsel."

"That's out of all reason," said Horace, "and you know it. I will never give her up, so long as she is willing to keep to me."

"Maiden," said the Jinnee, addressing Sylvia for the first time, "the matter rests with thee. Wilt thou release this my son from his contract, since thou art no fit wife for such as he?"

"How can I," cried Sylvia, "when I love him and he loves me? What a wicked, tyrannical old thing you must be to expect it! I *can't* give him up."

"It is but giving up what can never be thine," said Fakrash. "And be not anxious for him, for I will reward and console him a thousandfold for the loss of thy society. A little while, and he shall remember thee no more."

"Don't believe him, darling," said Horace; "you know me better than that."

"Remember," said the Jinnee, "that by thy refusal thou wilt condemn thy parent to remain a mule throughout all his days. Art thou so unnatural and hard-hearted a daughter as to do this thing?"

"Oh, I couldn't!" cried Sylvia. "I can't let poor father remain a mule all his life when one word—and yet what *am* I to do? Horace, what shall I say? Advise me . . . Advise me!"

"Heaven help us both!" groaned Ventimore. "If I could only see the right thing to do. Look here, Mr. Fakrash," he added, "this is a matter that requires consideration. Will you relieve us of your presence for a short time, while we talk it over?"

"With all my heart," said the Jinnee, in the most obliging manner in the world, and vanished instantly.

"Now, darling," began Horace, after he had gone, "if that unspeakable old scoundrel is really in earnest, there's no denying that he's got us in an extremely tight place. But I can't bring myself to believe that he *does* mean it. I fancy he's only trying us. And what I want you to do is not to consider me in the matter at all."

"How can I help it?" said poor Sylvia. "Horace, you—you don't *want* to be released, do you?"

"I!" said Horace, "when you are all I have in the world! That's so likely, Sylvia! But we are bound to look facts in the face. To begin with, even if this hadn't happened, your people wouldn't let our engagement continue. For my prospects have changed again, dearest. I'm even worse off than when we first met, for that confounded Jinnee has contrived to lose my first and only client for me—the one thing worth having he ever gave me." And he told her the story of the mushroom palace and Mr. Wackerbath's withdrawal. "So you see, darling," he concluded, "I haven't even a home to offer you; and if I had, it would be miserably uncomfortable for you with that old Marplot continually dropping in on us—especially if, as I'm afraid he has, he's taken some unreasonable dislike to you."

"But surely you can talk him over?" said

Sylvia; "you said you could do anything you liked with him."

"I'm beginning to find," he replied, ruefully enough, "that he's not so easily managed as I thought. And for the present, I'm afraid, if we are to get the Professor out of this, that there's nothing for it but to humour old Fakrash."

"Then you actually advise me to—to break it off?" she cried; "I never thought you would do that!"

"For your own sake," said Horace; "for your father's sake. If *you* won't, Sylvia, I *must*. And you will spare me that? Let us both agree to part, and—and trust that we shall be united some day."

"Don't try to deceive me or yourself, Horace," she said; "if we part now, it will be for ever."

He had a dismal conviction that she was right. "We must hope for the best," he said, drearily; "Fakrash may have some motive in all this we don't understand. Or he may relent. But part we must, for the present."

"Very well," she said. "If he restores dad, I will give you up. But not unless."

"Hath the damsel decided?" asked the Jinnee, suddenly re-appearing; "for the period of deliberation is past."

"Miss Futvoye and I," Horace answered for her, "are willing to consider our engagement at an end, until you approve of its renewal, on condition that you restore her father at once."

"Agreed!" said Fakrash. "Conduct me to him, and we will arrange the matter without delay."

Outside they met Mrs. Futvoye on her way from the study. "You here, Horace?" she exclaimed. "And who is this—gentleman?"

"This," said Horace, "is the--er—author of the Professor's misfortunes, and he has come here at my request to undo his work."

"It *would* be so kind of him!" exclaimed the distressed lady, who was by this time far beyond either surprise or resentment. "I'm sure, if he knew all we have gone through——!" and she led the way to her husband's room.

As soon as the door was opened the Professor seemed to recognise his tormentor in spite of his changed raiment, and was so powerfully agitated that he actually reeled on his four legs, and "stood over" in a lamentable fashion.

"O, man of distinguished attainments!" began the Jinnee, "whom I have caused, for reasons that are known unto thee, to assume the shape of a mule, speak, I adjure thee, and tell me where thou hast deposited the inscribed seal which is in thy possession."

The Professor spoke; and the effect of articulate speech proceeding from the mouth of what was to all outward seeming an ordinary mule was strange beyond description. "I'll see you hanged first," he said, sullenly. "You can't do worse to me than you've done already!"

"As thou wilt," said Fakrash; "but unless I regain it, I will not restore thee to what thou wast."

"Well, then," said the mule, savagely, "you'll find it in the top right-hand drawer of my writing-table: the key is in that diorite bowl on the mantelpiece."

The Jinnee unlocked the drawer and took out the metal cap, which he placed in the breast pocket of his incongruous frock-coat. "So far, well," he said; "next thou must deliver up to me the transcription thou hast made, and swear to preserve an inviolable secrecy regarding the meaning thereof."

"Do you know what you're asking, sir?" said the mule, laying back his ears viciously. "Do you think that to oblige you I'm going to suppress one of the most remarkable discoveries of my whole scientific career? Never, sir—never!"

"Since if thou refusest I shall assuredly deprive thee of speech once more and leave thee a mule, as thou art now, of hideous appearance," said the Jinnee, "thou art like to gain little by a discovery which thou wilt be unable to impart. However, the choice rests with thee."

The mule rolled his one eye, and showed all his teeth in a vicious snarl. "You've got the whip-hand of me," he said, "and I may as well give in. There's a transcript inside my blotting-case—it's the only copy I've made."

Fakrash found the paper, which he rubbed into invisibility between his palms, as any ordinary conjurer might do.

"Now raise thy right forefoot," he said, "and swear by all thou holdest sacred never to divulge what thou hast learnt"—which oath the Professor, in the vilest of tempers, took, clumsily enough.

"Good," said the Jinnee, with a grim smile. "Now let one of thy women bring me a cup of fair water."

Sylvia went out, and came back with a cup of water. "It's filtered," she said, anxiously; "I don't know if that will do?"

"It will suffice," said Fakrash. "Let both the women withdraw."

"Surely," remonstrated Mrs. Futvoye, "you don't mean to turn his wife and daughter out of the room at such a moment as this? We shall be perfectly quiet, and we may even be of some help."

"Do as you're told, my dear!" snapped the ungrateful mule; "do as you're told. You'll only be in the way here. Do you suppose he doesn't know his own beastly business?"

They left accordingly; whereupon Fakrash took the cup—an ordinary breakfast-cup with a Greek key-border pattern in pale blue round the top—and, drenching the mule with the contents, exclaimed, "Quit this form and return to the form in which thou wast!"

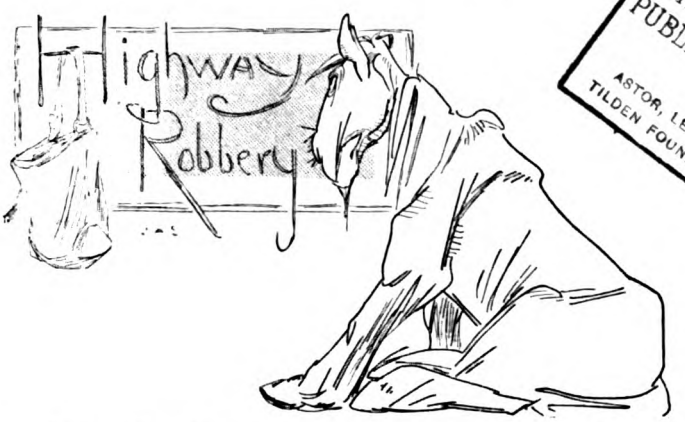
For a dreadful moment or two it seemed as if no effect was to be produced; the animal simply stood and shivered, and Ventimore began to feel an agonizing suspicion that the Jinnee really had, as he had first asserted, forgotten how to perform this particular incantation.

All at once the mule reared, and began to beat the air frantically with his fore-hoofs; after which he fell heavily backward into the nearest arm-chair (which was fortunately a solid and capacious piece of furniture) with his fore-legs hanging limply at his sides in a semi-human fashion. There was a brief convulsion, and then, by some gradual process unspeakably impressive to witness, the man seemed to break through the mule, the mule became merged in the man — and Professor Futvoye, restored to his own natural form and habit, sat gasping and trembling in the chair before them.

"PROFESSOR FUTVOYE SAT GASPING AND TREMBLING."

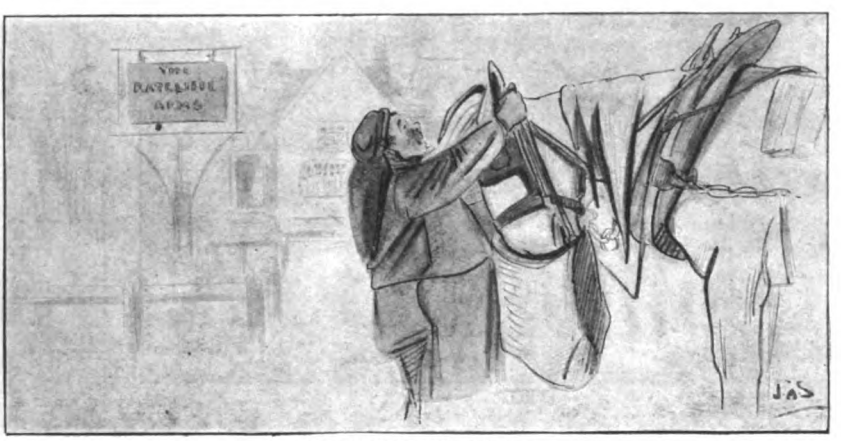
(*To be continued.*)

Animal Actualities.

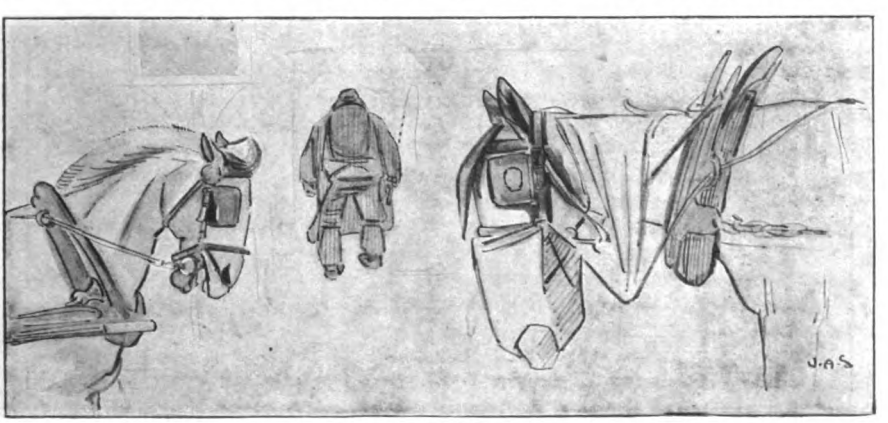


THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.
ASTOR, LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

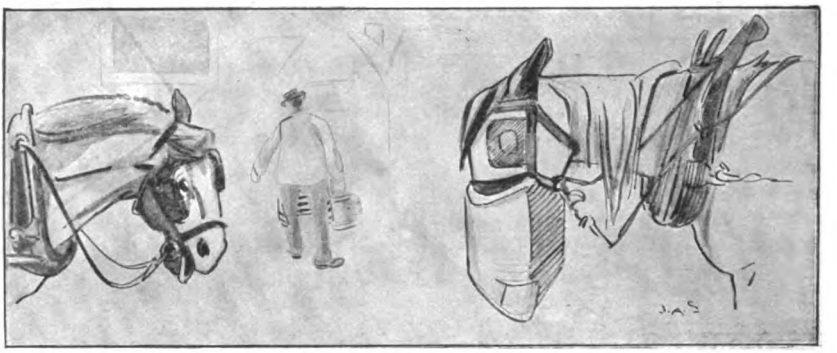
THIS tale is a warning to all zealous philanthropists who are apt to rush at deeds of charity without reasonable reflection. At the Ratcliffe Arms Inn, Almondbury, near Huddersfield, in Yorkshire, a coal-dealer pulled up, as coal-dealers will—and certain other people. He took thought for his horse's refreshment first, swung out the nose-bag from under the cart, and buckled it over the feature it was designed to adorn. This



REFRESHMENT FOR BEAST—

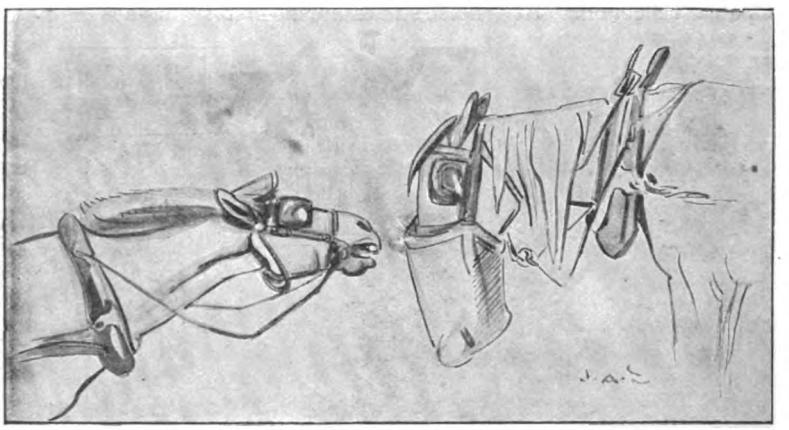


—AND MAN.

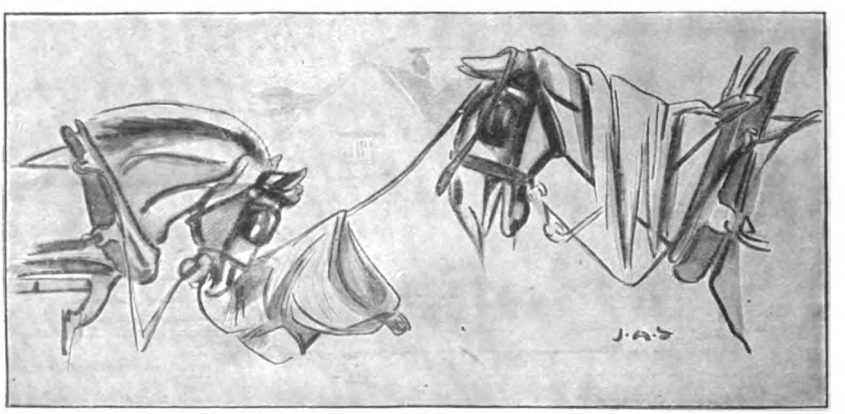


SIGHT.

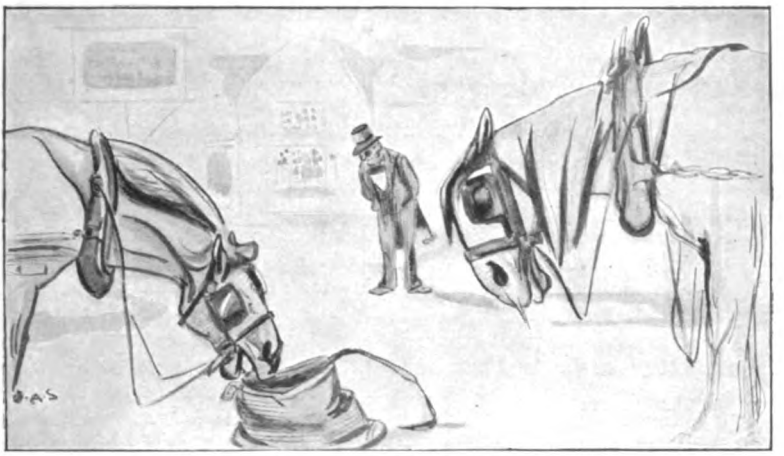
duty performed, the coalman faded imperceptibly away in the direction of the bottle and jug department, intent on experiments in the properties of fluid bodies. With that a lively milk-cart dashed up and came to a stand also, the horse face to face with the coal-dealer's animal. The milkman, like the coalman, drifted away to the region of bottles and jugs, though with no particular scientific intention, since he carried with him a can of the fluid of his trade. But the milkman had no nose-bag, so that his horse was left with his nose unembellished and his hunger unsatisfied. But the situation was intolerable to any healthy horse. There hung a bag of good corn a yard from the milk-horse's nose, but actually (and invidiously) on the nose of the coal-horse. The milk-horse moved up a step, and sniffed; then another step, and sniffed again; and when smell joined its temptation to sight Nature could bear no more. A plunge and a snap, and the milk-horse had laid hold of the nose-bag and was



SMELL.

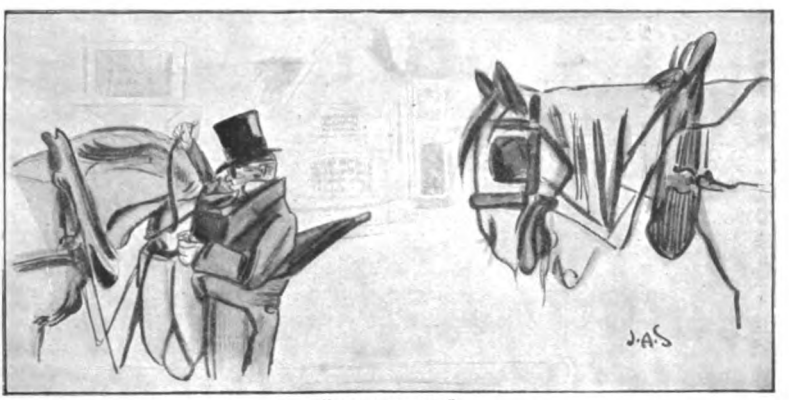


FEEL.



TASTE.

pulling vigorously. The coal-horse pulled, too, but there was treachery in one insecure buckle, and the milk-horse won the tug. Down came the bag, and the milk-horse backed a yard or two, dragging it with him, and then began such a meal as he could manage to munch from the ground, while the despoiled coal-horse glared mournfully. But at this moment a dear old philanthropist in spectacles came along, and, observing a poor, hungry horse suffering inconvenience in reaching so low for its dinner, he instantly came to the rescue, raised the fallen bag, and strapped it securely—on the milk-horse, of course. For he was a benevolent old gentleman, and did not guess that the milk-horse was a thief. So that a surprise awaited the coal-dealer when he issued forth, and he might have supposed the milk-horse a cleverer thief than he actually was, but for the explanations of Mr. Fred Parkin, who observed the whole comedy.



"PHILHIPPOPHY."

AMAZEMENT.

The Romance of Lighthouse Building.

By Ray Stannard Baker.

A LARGE proportion of the lighthouses, which are by far the most important Governmental works for the protection of the mariner, are built on land well above the wash of the sea, where they require only the ordinary skill of the carpenter, the mason, and the iron-worker.

The small remaining residue, the off-shore lights, built in the most difficult and dangerous locations that can be selected, have cost more, both in construction and in subsequent maintenance, than all the others put together. The true sea-builder speaks with something akin to contempt for the ordinary shore-light. He must have tides, breakers, ice-packs, wrecks, fierce currents, and wind-storms to test his mettle and to show what he can do. Not only must he be a skilled engineer and a trained builder, but he has need of the mysterious human elements of courage, executive foresight, resourcefulness in the face of danger, and indomitable perseverance in surmounting obstacles. His work is a constant warfare, and his foe is always vigilant, always cruel and implacable, and in the long stretch of years always victorious. It is with this warfare and with some of the men who have been its heroes that this article has to deal.

In lighthouse-building the stone-tower light easily takes precedence both in age and in the difficulties and dangers which attend its construction. A little more than 140 years ago John Smeaton, maker of odd and intricate philosophical instruments and dabbler in mechanical engineering, was called upon to place a light on the bold reefs of Eddystone, near Plymouth, and it is to him that the world owes the idea of building a lighthouse in the form of a solid stone tower. Twice before the rocks of Eddystone had been marked with a light. The first structure, built by the Winstanley of song and story, was bowled over one night in a storm, and the builder and his keepers were carried to their deaths; the second, the work of John Rudyerd, was burned to the water's edge, and one of the keepers died from the effects of melting lead which fell from the roof and entered his open mouth as he gazed upward. Both of these lighthouses were of wood, the first being ornamented with fantastic balconies and bay windows, which furnished ready leverage for wind and wave.

John Smeaton, profiting by the disasters which befell his predecessors, laid down the principle that the weight of a lighthouse should be as great as possible in proportion to its mass; that it should be built of stone to avoid the possibility of fire; and that the stones should be so fastened together that the tower would resist the force of the waves with a degree of stability equal to that of a monolith. For a suitable model of form Smeaton went back to Nature. In his memoirs he tells with delicious quaintness how he observed the strength with which an oak tree bore its great weight of leaves and branches; and when he built his lighthouse it was wide and flaring at the base, like the oak, and deeply rooted into the sea-rock with wedges of wood and iron. The waist was tapering and cylindrical in section, bearing the weight of the keeper's quarters and the lantern as firmly and jauntily as the oak bears its branches.

With Smeaton as the pioneer, other engineers have dared all manner of difficult tasks, although they have since discarded the flaring base for the straight-sided frustum of a cone. In England the famous lighthouses of Bell Rock, Skerryvore, and Wolf Rock are all stone towers, and in America Minot's Ledge, off Boston Harbour, more difficult of construction than any of them, and Spectacle Reef Light, in Lake Huron, are good examples of this method of building.

In stone-tower lights, as in all other kinds, the first and greatest difficulty which the builder has to meet lies in placing the foundation. For instance, when Captain Alexander began work on Minot's Ledge, in 1855, he had an apparently impossible problem to solve. A bold, black knob of rock lay in the sea just off the south-eastern chop of the bay. At high tide the waters covered it entirely and its place was indicated by a few restless breakers; or, if the water was very calm, by a smooth, oily, treacherous eddy. At the lowest tide it reached a glistening head, laced around with a collar

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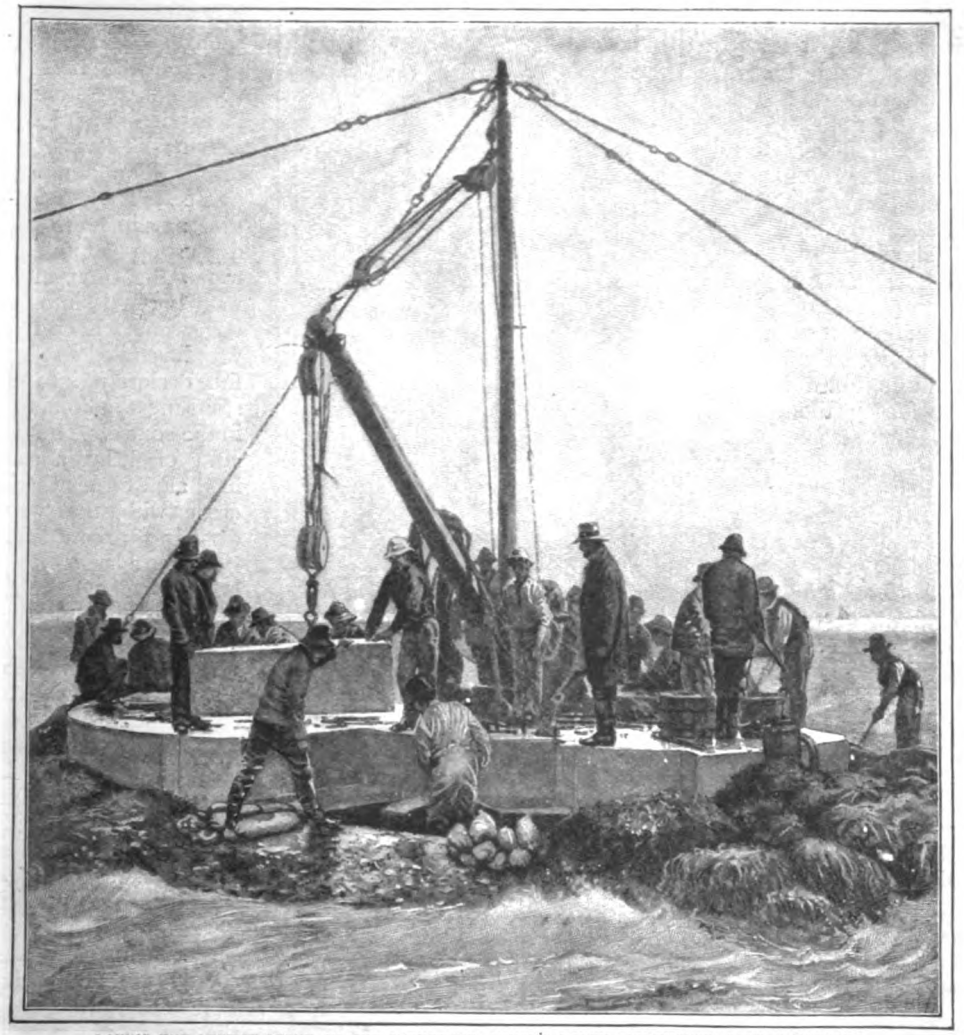


LAYING THE LOWEST STONE IN THE STRUCTURE, MINOT'S LEDGE LIGHTHOUSE, BOSTON HARBOUR.
From a Photograph in the possession of the Lighthouse Board, taken at sunrise, Sunday morning, July 4, 1858, three years after the work was started.

of surf, a few feet above the surface of the water. In thirty years' time forty-three vessels had been dashed to pieces upon it, twenty-seven of which were totally lost, together with their crews. A small light propped on wrought-iron piles already had occupied the rock, but on a stormy night in April, 1851, while the bell in the tower was ringing furiously, the waves and the wind twisted it from its moorings, and hurled it over 100ft. into the sea, carrying its keepers with it.

Upon this ill-fated rock Captain Alexander agreed to build a stone tower 106ft. high and 30ft. in diameter at the base. On his first visit to the reef it was so slippery with sea-moss, and the waves dashed over it so fiercely, that he could not maintain his footing. Part of the ledge was always covered with water and the remainder, even at low tide, was never bare more than three or four hours at a time.

Captain Alexander sent a crew of men to the rock to scrape it clear of weeds and to cut level steps on which they could maintain a firm footing. They worked with desperate energy. When a great wave came rolling in from the sea the foreman shouted and they all fell on their faces, clinging together, and held their breath until the rock was bare again. Sometimes, when a storm blew up suddenly and the boats dared not approach near enough to effect a landing, the boatswain was accustomed to cast out a line. One

of the workmen would seize it, make it fast to his wrist, and plunge boldly into the sea. Then the sailors would pull him in like a great, clumsy cod. Working in instant danger of their lives, and continually drenched and suffering from the smarting of salt-water sores, Captain Alexander's men were able to cut only four or five little holes in the rock during the whole of the first season. And yet they could console themselves with the fact that it took Winstanley, of the first Eddystone light, four years to drill twelve foundation-holes and fit them with iron rods.

In the second year the workmen succeeded in building an iron platform 20ft. above low water. Ropes were stretched between the piles on which it rested, and when the waves were high the men clung to them to prevent being washed into the sea. The next winter a big coast-wise bark, driven in by a storm, swept away the platform, crushed the face of the rock, and ruined two years of hard work in a single night. In the third year the workmen succeeded in laying four foundation-stones, and in the fifth year the six lower courses of the tower were completed. The work of fitting the stones in place was full of excitement. Stout bags of sand were swung on a crane from a boat to the rock. While they were pitching and tossing in the air the men caught them and piled them up in the form of a small pen and rammed them firmly together. Sometimes it took three or four staggering men, each clinging with one hand to the life-ropes, to handle a single bag. The inside of this primitive coffer-dam was then baled out and wiped dry with a sponge. Meantime the men on the boat had prepared the stone by laying it on a piece of thin muslin covered with mortar, like a mustard plaster. The edges of the muslin were then drawn up around the top of the stone and it was lowered into the coffer-dam. Each stone was dovetailed so that it fitted closely into the stone next adjoining it in the course. The difficulty of fitting a stone held aloft on a swinging crane with the waves dashing around the workmen's legs can well be imagined. Quantities of sledges and drills were swept from the rock and lost. One of the more inventive workmen conceived the idea of wearing a life-belt and fastening his sledge to his wrist. This scheme was generally adopted, and it worked admirably until a breaker washed one of the men off the rock. Owing to the weight on his wrist his head went down, and only his legs were left sprawling above the surface of the water. He was rescued with the greatest difficulty.

MINOT'S LEDGE LIGHTHOUSE AS IT NOW APPEARS.

In five years' time the light was finished, "rising sheer out of the sea," as Longfellow described it, "like a huge stone cannon, mouth upward." It cost the Government $300,000.

The devotion and the loyalty of the lighthouse builder approach the enthusiasm of the soldier in the heat of battle. When the first of the Stephensons was building the Bell Rock Light on the famous Inch-Cape Reef, his Scotchmen worked with the desperation of despair. Only two could remain on the rock at a time, but they stuck there with the tenacity of leeches, the cold water of the north seas bearing down every few

minutes and whipping entirely over them. In describing the progress of the work Stephenson tells with quaint humour how the drenched workers were cheered by a sailor on board the work ship, who played sweetly on a German flute. Iron rods were fastened into the reef to hold the courses of the tower. When the first stone was at last swung out on the tipsy crane the Scottish workmen, ragged and chilled and worn with the awful struggle, clung to the iron rods and cheered madly, like soldiers just over the crest of an enemy's fort.

One of the most difficult of all stone-tower lighthouses to build was the Spectacle Reef Light, in the northern end of Lake Huron, near the Straits of Mackinac. Here the problem dealt not with tides or heavy seas, but with the crushing force of the ice-packs that came down out of the north and moved with all the mighty power of a glacier. Moreover, the tower must be placed on a lone rock lying over ten miles from land and 11ft. under the surface of the water. At first the engineers declared the feat impossible of accomplishment, but the wreck of a number of valuable vessels on the reef spurred them to attempt the task. The plans were drawn by General O. M. Poe, who was Sherman's chief engineer on the famous march to the sea. An enormous wooden crib, 92ft. square, 24ft. high, and having a space within 68ft. square, was built at a harbour twelve miles away, and towed out to the site of the proposed lighthouse. Here it was sunk to the bottom and weighted with stone, thereby forming a quiet pond in which the work could be prosecuted. A great bottomless tub, 36ft. in diameter, and having staves 14ft. long, was now built and suspended exactly over the site of the tower. A rope of oakum was tacked to its lower edge, and a diver having cleaned off the rock foundation the tub was lowered into the water. Where the lake bottom was irregular the staves were mauled down until each of them pressed close down on the rock. Then the divers, toiling in the icy water, filled all the openings around the bottom of the tub with hay and Portland cement. A huge pump sucked all the water out of the tub, and the rock lay clean and bare, ready for the workmen.

THE LIGHTHOUSE ON SPECTACLE REEF, LAKE HURON.

Owing to the approach of winter great haste was necessary to secure the preliminary work, so that it would not be affected by the ice. Not infrequently the men were called out at three o'clock in the morning, and they were allowed only a few minutes for meals during a day's work that often lasted from eighteen to twenty-one hours. During the last days of the season snow and sleet fell almost constantly, and the waves frequently dashed over the breakwater, keeping the men drenched. The next summer the work was continued with renewed zeal. For the first 34ft. the tower was built of solid masonry 32ft. in diameter, the stones all dovetailed firmly together, and the courses attached one to another with heavy iron rods. As in all other lighthouses, the builders used Portland cement, which possesses the remarkable property of becoming as hard as the hardest rock, whether used under the water, or outside of it like ordinary mortar. By mixing Portland cement with sand and gravel the builder produces concrete, without which modern lighthouse building would be almost an impossibility. In effect, therefore, the Spectacle Reef light for 34ft. of its height became a single massive rock, capable of enormous resistance. In the top of the tower five keepers' rooms were built one above the other and connected with spiral stairways. Far up at the pinnacle stands the cylindrical box of iron and glass which protects the light. The cost of the Spectacle Reef tower was $375,000. In the spring after it was finished the work of the builders was given a remarkable test. The keepers, returning

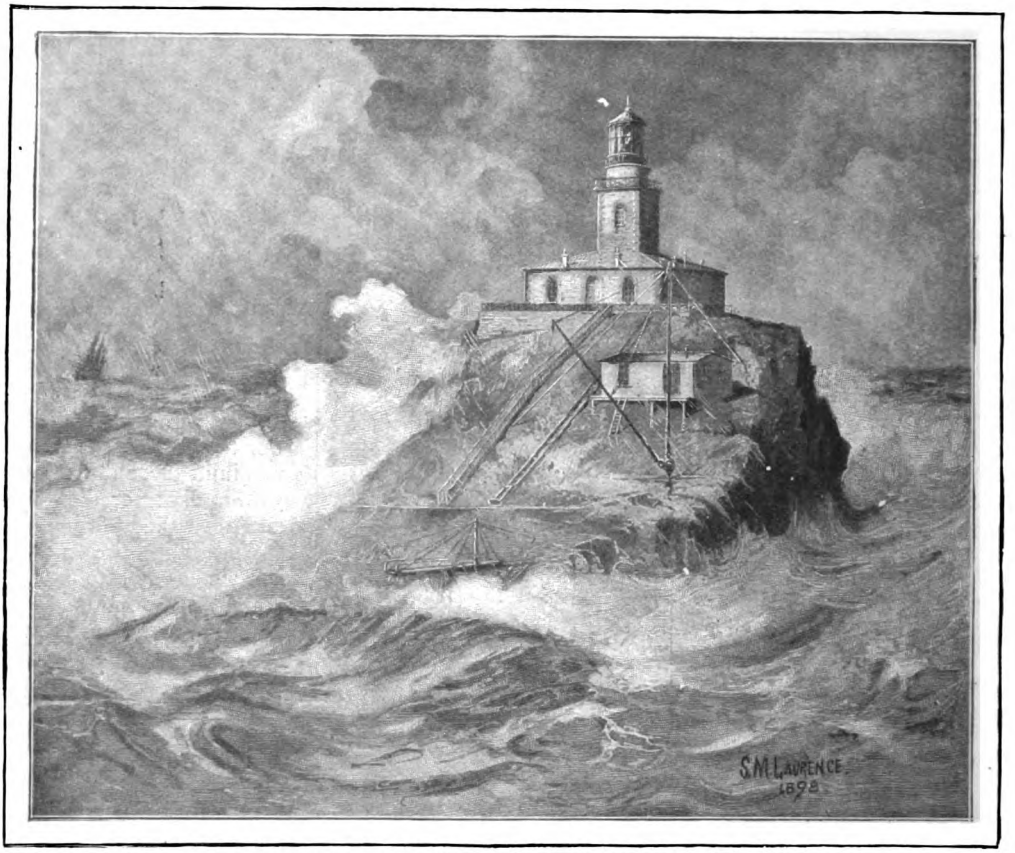
to their sturdy charge, found the hitherto irresistible ice-pack piled to a depth of more than 30ft. around the tower, so that they had to cut their way in to the door.

Following General Poe's plans a similar lighthouse was afterwards constructed on Stannard's Rock, in Lake Superior.

Even more terrible difficulties and dangers were encountered in building Tillamook Lighthouse, off the coast of Oregon. While its foundation is not submerged, by virtue of its exposed position in the ocean, it belongs properly among the off-shore lights. The island rock on which it rests rises a sheer 80ft. above a brawling sea and resembles a great, bushy lion's head. It is only a mile from the mainland, but the nearest harbour, owing to the precipitous shores, is twenty miles away at the mouth of the Columbia River. So violent are the waves that break around the ragged edges of the island that it was only with the utmost difficulty that the surveyors made their first landings. One expedition was headed by an experienced English lighthouse builder named Trewavas. When he reached the rock it was edged with surf, although the sea outside was almost wholly calm. When the boat was swept up close to the rock he and one of the sailors leaped for shore. Trewavas stumbled, and was carried out to sea and drowned in sight of his boat's crew.

One of the earliest and oddest difficulties with which the Tillamook builders had to contend was an immense herd of sea-lions which defended their ancient citadel with persistent valour. Before the workmen were allowed undisputed possession they were compelled to arm themselves and drive the herd repeatedly into the sea.

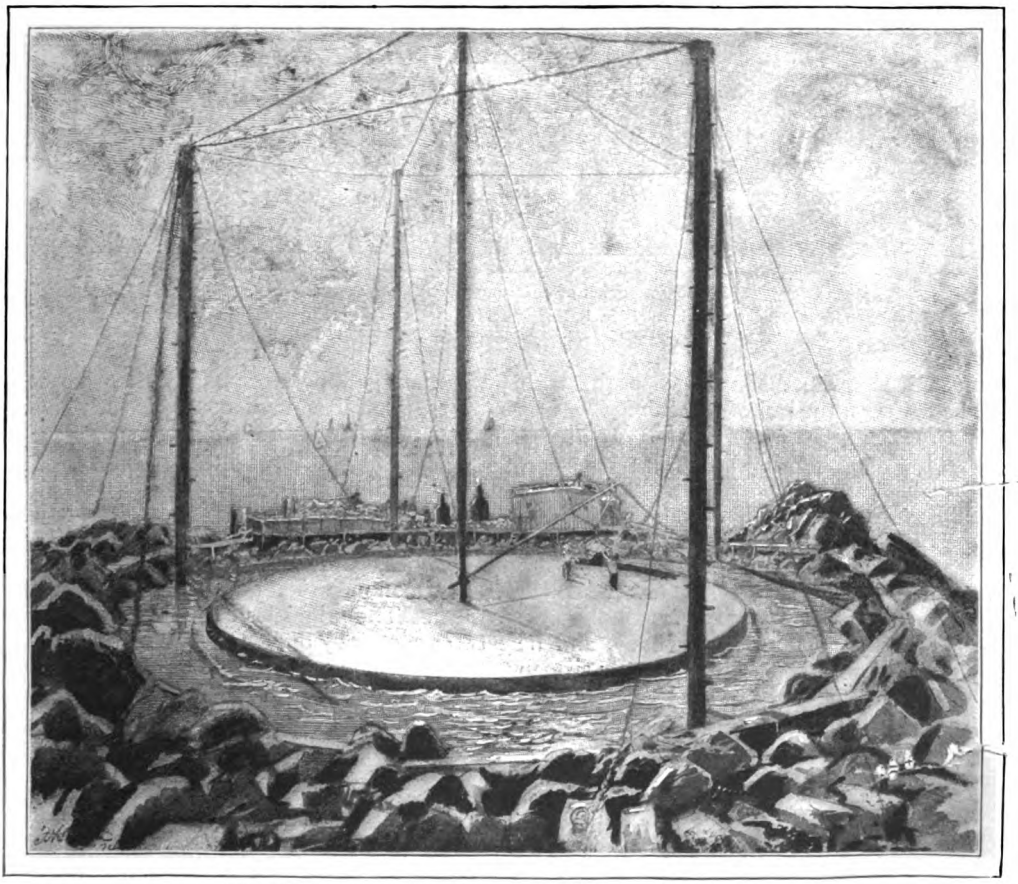
Owing to the great difficulty in making landings most of the workmen were sent to the rock in a breeches-buoy. A thick hawser was stretched from the summit of the island to the mast of a ship lying 300ft. away in calm water. Along this travelled the buoy,



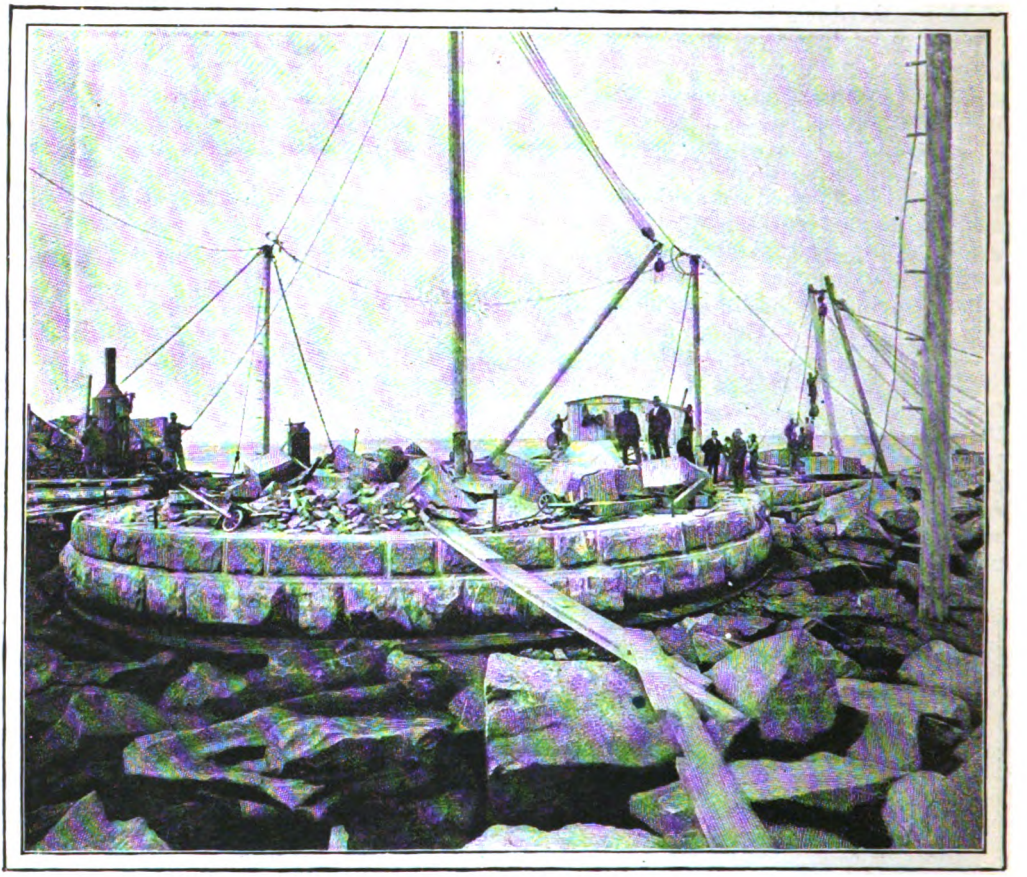
A STORM AT THE TILLAMOOK ROCK LIGHTHOUSE, OREGON.

which consisted of a life-preserver fastened to a stout pair of breeches cut off at the knees. Sometimes when the water was a trifle rough, giving the ship a rolling motion, the hawser would slacken suddenly, let the buoy and its passenger drop with sickening velocity into the sea, and then snatch him out, and hurl him fiercely a hundred feet in the air. Only men of seasoned pluck could be persuaded to make this trip at all. A large crew were finally landed with supplies enough to last them several months, and at the coming of winter and rough weather the ship was compelled to leave them to their fate. One night in January a tornado drove the waves entirely over the rock, crushing the tent in which the men slept and washing away most of their provisions and nearly all their tools, clothing, and equipment. For days at a time in the coldest weather of a northern winter they were compelled to lie clinging to the slippery rock, drenched with icy water, covered with swiftly succeeding storms of snow and sleet, and cut by the sharp sea-winds. During all this time they had no sufficient means of warming themselves, practically no fresh water to drink, and nothing to eat but hard tack and bacon, soaked in sea-water. Few Arctic explorers ever had to suffer the perils of privations to which these lighthouse builders were subjected. And yet they lived and built a great lighthouse on the summit of the rock.

Colonel G. L. Gillespie, the engineer who had charge of this great work, tells an amusing story of the difficulties of the light-house establishment in finding a cook who was willing to live on the rock, cut off wholly for months at a time from communication with the outside world. Finally a portly, good-natured German named Greuber agreed to accept the position. He was promptly sent down to Tillamook, but when he saw the tossing breeches-buoy in which he was



CONSTRUCTION OF THE RACE ROCK LIGHTHOUSE, LONG ISLAND SOUND.
This picture, showing the state of the foundation on September 5, 1874, is from a Sketch by Mr. F. Hopkinson Smith, the constructing engineer.



CONSTRUCTION OF THE RACE ROCK LIGHTHOUSE.

This picture, from a Photograph lent by Mr. F. Hopkinson Smith, shows the progress made in the construction on September 15, 1874. (See picture on preceding page.)

expected to make the passage to the rock he held fast to the rail of the ship.

"I am too fat," he explained.

On his return to Astoria his friends made so much fun of him that he declared he would go to the rock if it killed him. He turned as white as chalk when the buoy was strapped around him, but he made the trip without even wetting his feet. After that, however, nothing would persuade him to venture again in the perilous buoy, and he died recently on the rock after nearly sixteen years of steady service.

In the construction of Race Rock Light, in Long Island Sound, the builders also found themselves confronted by great difficulties and dangers. The foundation-rock is just off Fisher's Island Sound at the mouth of the Race, where the water rushes both ways, according to the tide, with great violence and force. A quantity of stone rip-rap was thrown into the swift water, where it was arranged by divers and then covered with a circular mass of concrete, on which a tower of solid granite was constructed.

A stone-tower lighthouse bears much the same relation to an iron-pile lighthouse that a sturdy oak bears to a willow twig. One meets the fury of wind and wave by stern resistance, opposing force to force; the other conquers its difficulties by avoiding them. The principles of construction of the two are entirely different, and the builder of the screw-pile or disc-pile light is confronted by his own peculiar problems and dangers.

A completed iron-pile lighthouse has the odd appearance of a huge, ugly spider standing knee-deep in the sea. Its squat body is the home of the keeper, with a single bright eye of light at the top, and its long, spindly legs are the iron piles on which the structure rests. Thirty years ago lighthouse builders were much enamoured with the ease and apparent durability of the pile light. An

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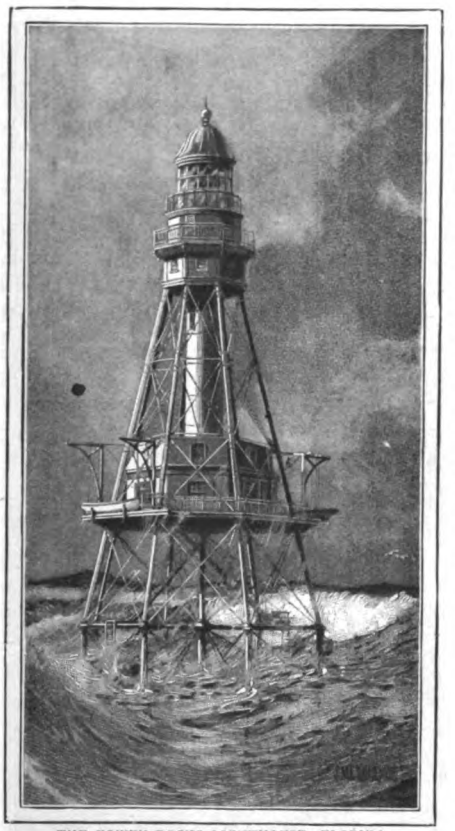
Englishman named Mitchell had invented an iron pile having at the end a screw not unlike the point of a large auger. By boring a number of these piles deep into the sand and using them as the foundation for a light but durable iron building, he was enabled to construct a lighthouse in a considerable depth of water at a small expense. Later builders have used ordinary iron piles which are driven into the sand with heavy sledges. Waves and tides play readily through the open work of the foundation, the legs of the spider, without disturbing the building overhead. For southern waters, where there is no danger of moving ice-packs, lighthouses of this type have been found very useful, although the action of the salt water on the iron piling necessitates frequent repairs. More than eighty lights of this description dot the shoals of Florida and adjoining States. Some of the oldest ones still remain in use in the north, notably the one on Brandywine Shoal, in Delaware Bay, but it has been found necessary to surround them with strongly built ice-breakers.



THE FOWEY ROCKS LIGHTHOUSE, FLORIDA.

Two magnificent iron-pile lights are found on Fowey Rocks and American Shoals, off the coast of Florida, the first of which was built with much difficulty.

Fowey Reef lies five miles from the low coral island of Soldier Key. Northern storms sweeping down the Atlantic rush in wild breakers over the reef and out upon the little Key, often burying it entirely under a torrent of water. Even in calm weather the sea is rarely quiet enough to make it safe for a vessel of any size to approach the reef. The builders erected a stout elevated wharf and store-house on the Key, and brought their men and tools to await the opportunity to dart out when the sea was at rest and begin the work of making the reef. Before shipment the lighthouse, which was built in the north, was set up complete from foundation to pinnacle and thoroughly tested.

At length the workmen were able to stay on the reef long enough to build a strong working platform 12ft. above the surface of the water and set on iron-shod mangrove piles. Having established this base of operations in the enemy's domain, a heavy iron disc was lowered to the reef, and the first pile was driven through the hole at its centre. Elaborate tests were made after each blow of the sledge, and the slightest deviation from the vertical was promptly rectified with block and tackle. In two months' time nine piles were driven 10ft. into the coral rock, the workmen toiling long hours under a blistering sun. When the time came to erect the superstructure the sea suddenly awakened, and storm followed storm, so that for weeks together no one dared venture out to the reef. The men rusted and grumbled on the narrow docks of the Key, and work was finally suspended for an entire winter. At the first attempt to make a landing in the spring a tornado drove the vessels far out of their course. But a crew was finally placed on the working platform with enough food to last them several weeks, and there they stayed suspended between the sea and the sky until the structure was complete. This lighthouse cost $175,000.

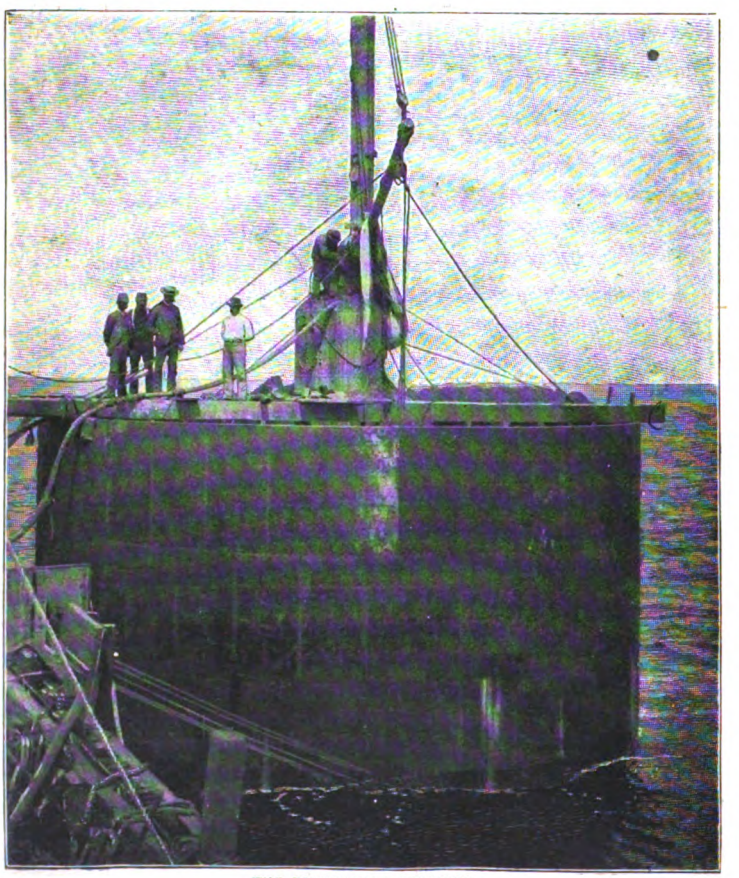
The famous Bug Light of Boston and Thimble Light of Hampton Roads, Virginia, are both good examples of the screw-pile lighthouse.

Another class of lighthouse, quite different from either of those already described, consists of a solid iron tower with a core of concrete, in the construction of which the sea-builder touches the pinnacle of his art. Here is a sandy shoal marked only by a white-fringed breaker. The water rushes over it in swift and constantly varying cur-

rents, and if there is a capful of wind anywhere on the sea it becomes an instant menace to the mariner. The shore may be ten or twenty miles away—so far, that a land light would only lure the seaman into peril instead of guiding him safely on his way. A lightship is always uncertain: the first great storm may drive it from its moorings, and leave the coast unprotected when protection is most necessary. Upon such a shoal, often covered from 10ft. to 20ft. with water, the builder is called upon to construct a lighthouse, laying his foundation in shifting sand, and placing upon it a building strong enough to withstand any storm, or the crushing weight of wrecks or ice-packs. Such is the problem that has been successfully solved at many dangerous shoals along the American coast.

It was less than twenty years ago that the sea-builders first ventured to grapple with the difficulties presented by these off-shore shoals. In 1881 Germany built the first cylinder iron lighthouse at Rothersand, near the mouth of the Weser River, and three years later the Lighthouse Establishment of the United States planted a similar tower on Fourteen Foot Banks, over three miles from the shores of Delaware Bay, in 20ft. of water. Since then many hitherto dangerous shoals have been marked by new lighthouses of this type.

When a builder begins a stone-tower light on some lonely sea rock, he says to the sea, "Do your worst. I am going to stick here until this light is built, if it takes a hundred years." And his men are always on hand in fair weather or foul, dropping one stone to-day and another to-morrow, and succeeding by virtue of steady grit and patience. The builder of the iron cylinder light pursues an exactly opposite course. His warfare is more spirited, more modern. He stakes his whole success on a single desperate throw. If he fails, he loses everything; if he wins, he may throw again. His lighthouse is built from foundation caisson to lantern a hundred or a thousand miles away. It is simply an enormous cast-iron tube made in sections or courses, each about 6ft. high, not unlike the standpipe of a village water-works. The builder must set up this tube on the shoal, sink it deep into the sandy bottom, and fill it with concrete so that it will not tip over. At first sight such a feat would seem absolutely impossible, but the sea-builder has his own methods of fighting. With all the material necessary to his work, he creeps up on the shoal and lies quietly in some secluded harbour until the sea is calmly at rest, suspecting no attack. Then he darts out with his whole fleet, plants his foundation, and before the waves and the wind wake up he has established his outworks on the shoal.



THE FOUNDATION CYLINDER.

Last year W. H. Flaherty, of New York,

built such a lighthouse at Smith's Point, in Chesapeake Bay. At the mouth of the Potomac River the opposing tides and currents have built up shoals of sand extending eight or ten miles out into the bay. Here the waves, sweeping in from the open Atlantic, sometimes drown the side-lights of the big Boston steamers. The point has a grim story of wrecks and loss of life; last year alone four sea-craft were driven in and swamped on the shoals. The Lighthouse Establishment planned to set up the light just at the edge of the channel, about eight miles from shore, and 120 miles south of Baltimore.

Eighty thousand dollars were appropriated for doing the work. In August, 1896, the contractors formally agreed to build the lighthouse for $56,000, and, more than that, to have the lantern burning within a single year.

By the last of September a huge, unwieldy foundation caisson was framing in a Baltimore ship-yard. It was made in the form of a bottomless box 32ft. square and 12ft. high, with the top nearly as thick as the height of a man, so that it would easily sustain the weight of the great iron cylinder soon to be placed upon it. It was lined and caulked, painted inside and out, to make it air-tight, and then dragged out into the bay, together with half an acre of mud and dock timbers. Here the workmen crowned it with the first two courses of the iron cylinder—a collar 30ft. in diameter and about 12ft. high. Inside of this a second cylinder, a steel air-shaft, 5ft. in diameter, rose from a hole in the centre of the caisson, thus providing a means of entrance and exit when the structure should reach the shoal.

Upon the addition of this vast weight of iron and steel, the wooden caisson, although it weighed nearly a hundred tons, disappeared completely under the water, leaving in view only the great black rim of the iron cylinder and the top of the air-shaft.

On April 7th of the next year the fleet was ready to start on its voyage of conquest. The whole country had contributed to the expedition. Cleveland, Ohio, furnished the iron plates for the tower; Pittsburg sent steel and machinery; South Carolina supplied the enormous yellow pine timbers for the caisson; Washington provided two great barge-loads of stone; and New York City contributed hundreds of tons of Portland cement and sand and gravel, it being cheaper to bring even such supplies from the north than to gather them on the shores of the bay.

Everything necessary to the completion of the lighthouse and the maintenance of eighty-eight men was loaded aboard ship; and quite a fleet it made as it lay on the bay in the warm spring sunshine. The flag-ship was a big double-deck steamer, 200ft. over all, once used in the coastwise trade. She was loaded close down to her white lines, and men lay over her rails in double rows. She led the fleet down the bay, and the two tugs and seven barges followed in her wake like a flock of ducklings. The steamer towed the caisson at the head of a long hawser. It had an unwieldy, top-heavy swagger, like a tipsy Dutchman.

In three days the fleet reached the light-house site. During all this time the sea had been calm, with only occasional puffs of wind, and the builders planned, somewhat exultantly, to drop the caisson the moment they arrived.

But before they were well in sight of the point the sea awakened suddenly, as if conscious of the planned surprise. A storm blew up in the north, and at sunset, on the 10th of April, the waves were washing over the top of the iron cylinder and slapping it about like a boy's craft. A few tons of water inside the structure would sink it entirely, and the builder would lose months of work and thousands of dollars.

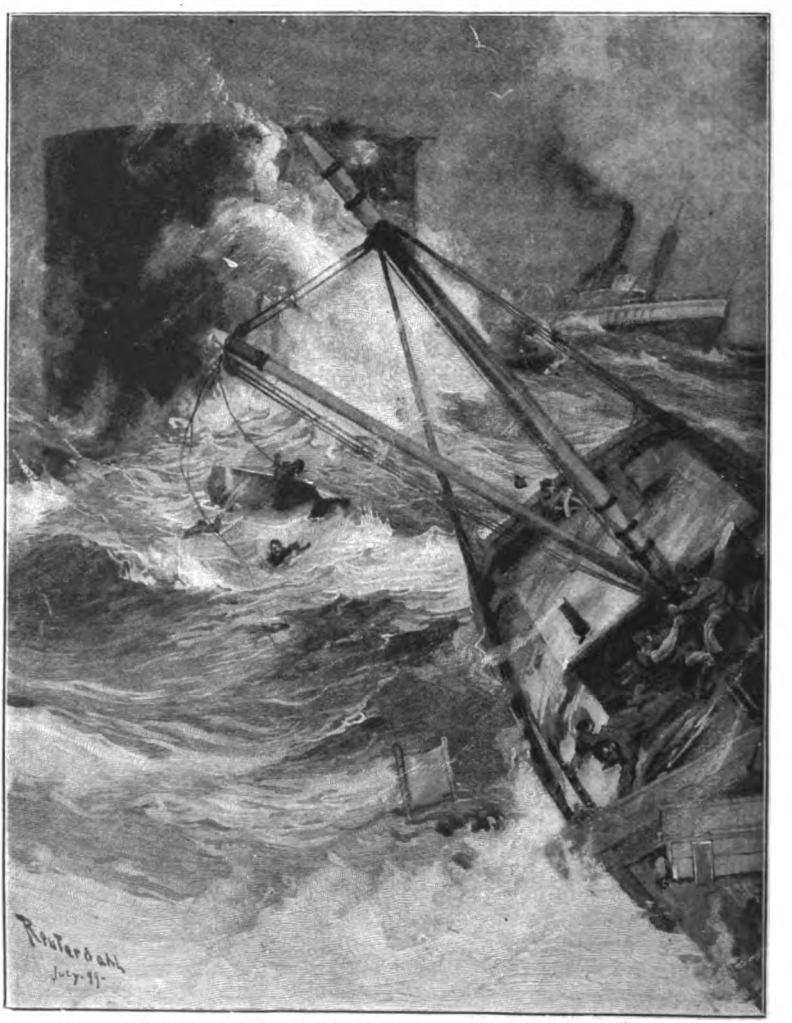
From a rude platform on top of the cylinder two men were working at the pumps to keep the water out. When the edge of the great iron rim heaved up with the waves they pumped and shouted, and when it went down they struggled and clung for their lives.

The builder saw the necessity of immediate assistance. Twelve men scrambled into a lifeboat, and three waves later they were dashed against the rim of the cylinder. Here half of the number, clinging like cats to the iron plates, spread out a sail canvas and drew it over the windward half of the cylinder, while the other men pulled it down with their hands and teeth and lashed it firmly into place. In this way the cylinder shed most of the wash, although the larger waves still scuttled down within its iron sides. Half of the crew were now hurried down the rope ladders inside of the cylinder, where the water was nearly 3ft. deep and swashing about like a whirlpool. They all knew that one more than ordinarily large wave would send the whole structure to the bottom, but they dipped swiftly and passed up the water without a word. It was nothing short of a battle for life. They must keep the water down or drown like rats in a

hole. They began to work at sunset, and at sunrise the next morning, when the fury of the storm was somewhat abated, they were still at work, and the cylinder was saved.

The swells were now too high to think of planting the caisson, and the fleet ran into the mouth of the great Wicomico River to await a more favourable opportunity. Here the builders lay for a week. To keep the men busy some of them were employed in mixing concrete, adding another course of iron to the cylinder, and in other tasks of preparation. The crew was composed largely of Americans and Irishmen, with a few Norwegians, the ordinary Italian or Bohemian labourer not taking kindly to the risks and terrors of such an expedition. Their number included carpenters, masons, ironworkers, bricklayers, caisson men, sailors, and a host of common shovellers. The pay varied from twenty to fifty cents an hour for time actually worked, and the builders furnished meals of unlimited ham, bread, and coffee.

On April 17th, the weather being calmer, the fleet ventured out stealthily. A buoy marked the spot where the lighthouse was to stand. When the cylinder was exactly over the chosen site the valves of two of the compartments into which it was divided were quickly opened, and the water poured in. The moment the lower edge of the caisson, borne downward by the weight of the water, touched the shoal, the men began working with feverish haste. Large stones were rolled from the barges around the outside of the caisson to prevent the water from eating away the sand and tipping the structure over. In the meantime a crew of twenty men had taken their places in the compartments of the cylinder still unfilled with water. A chute from the steamer vomited a steady stream of dusty concrete down upon their heads. A pump drenched them with an unceasing cataract of salt water. In this terrible hole they wallowed and struggled, shovelling the concrete mortar into place and ramming it down. Every man on the expedition, even the cooks and the stokers, were called upon at this supreme moment to take part in the work. Unless the structure could be sufficiently ballasted while the water was calm, the first wave



"THE SKY HAD TURNED BLACK AND THE WAVES RAN HIGH."

would brush it over and pound it to pieces on the shoals.

After two hours of this exhausting labour the captain of the steamer suddenly shouted the command to cast away.

The sky had turned black and the waves ran high. All the cranes were whipped in, and up from the cylinder poured the shovellers, looking as if they had been freshly rolled in a mortar-bed. There was a confused babel of voices and a wild flight for the steamer. In the midst of the excitement one of the barges snapped a hawser, and being lightened of its load it all but turned over in a trough of the sea. The men aboard her went down on their faces, clung fast and shouted for help, and it was only with difficulty that they were rescued. One of the lifeboats, venturing too near the iron cylinder, was crushed like an egg-shell, but a tug was ready to pick up the men who manned it.

So terrified were the workmen by the dangers and difficulties of the task that twelve of them ran away that night without asking for their pay.

On the following morning the builder was appalled to see that the cylinder was inclined more than 4ft. from the perpendicular. In spite of the stone piled around the caisson, the water had washed the sand from under one edge of it, and it had tipped part way over. Now was the pivotal point of the whole enterprise. A little lack of courage or skill, and the work was doomed.

The waves still ran high, and the freshet currents from the Potomac River poured past the shoals at the rate of six or seven miles an hour. And yet one of the tugs ran out daringly, dragging a large barge-load of stone. It was made fast, and although it pitched up and down so that every wave threatened to swamp it, and every man aboard was sea-sick, they managed to throw off two hundred tons more of stone around the base of the caisson on the side toward which it was inclined. In this way further tipping in that direction was prevented, and the action of the water on the sand under the opposite side soon righted the structure.

Beginning on the morning of April 21st the entire crew worked steadily for forty-eight hours, without sleeping or stopping for meals more than fifteen minutes at a time. When at last they were relieved they came up out of the cylinder shouting and cheering, because the foundation was at last secure.

The structure was now about 30ft. high, and filled nearly to the top with concrete. The next step was to force it down 15½ft. into the hard sand at the bottom of the bay, thus securing it for ever against the power of the waves and the tide. An air-lock, which is a strongly-built steel chamber about the size of a hogshead, was placed on the top of the air-shaft, the water in the big box-like caisson at the bottom of the cylinder was forced out with compressed air, and the men prepared to enter the caisson.

No toil can compare in its severity and danger with that of a caisson-worker. He is first sent into the air-lock and the air-pressure is gradually increased around him until it equals that of the caisson below, then he may descend. New men often shout and beg pitifully to be liberated from the torture. Frequently they bleed at the ears and nose, a terrible clutching comes at the throat, and for a time their heads throb as if about to burst open.

In a few minutes these pains pass away, the workers crawl down the long ladder of the air-shaft, and begin to dig away the sand of the sea bottom. It is washed high around the bottom of a 4in. pipe, which leads up the air-shaft and reaches out over the sea. A valve in the pipe is opened, and the sand and stones are driven upward by the compressed air of the caisson and blown out into the water with tremendous force. As the sand is mined away the great tower above it slowly sinks downwards, while the subterranean toilers grow sallow-faced, yellow-eyed, become half deaf, and lose their appetites.

When Smith's Point Light was within 2ft. of being deep enough the workmen had a strange and terrible adventure.

Thirty-five men were in the caisson at the time. They noticed that the candles stuck along the wall were burning a lambent green. Black streaks, that widened swiftly, formed along the white-painted walls. One man after another began staggering dizzily, with eyes blinded and a terrible burning in the throat. Orders were instantly given to ascend, and the crew, with the help of ropes, succeeded in escaping. All that night the men lay moaning and sleepless in their bunks. In the morning only a few of them could open their eyes, and they all experienced the keenest torture in the presence of light. Bags were fitted over their heads and they were led out to their meals.

That afternoon Major E. H. Ruffner, of Baltimore, the Government inspector for the district, appeared with two physicians. An examination of the caisson showed that the

men had struck a vein of sulphuretted hydrogen gas. When the air-lock was opened the stench became almost unendurable, even at a steamer's length from the cylinder.

Here was a new difficulty—a difficulty never before encountered in lighthouse construction. When the builder found he could not rid the caisson of gas even by repeated flooding, he laid the case before the inspector. In consideration of the fact that an apparently insurmountable obstacle had been encountered, would not the United States Government permit the foundation to remain where it was? The tower had been sunk nearly 14ft. into the sand of the shoal, where nothing could ever disturb it. But the inspector had no power to grant such permission, even if he had desired to do so. A Government is a hard master. It has its contract, and it is protected by the bond of the builder. The lighthouse must comply with the specifications, or it will not be accepted.

For three days the force lay idle. There seemed no way of completing the foundation. On the fourth day, after another flooding of the caisson, Mr. Flaherty called for volunteers to go down the air-shaft, agreeing to accompany them himself—all this in the face of the spectacle of thirty-five men moaning in their bunks, with their eyes burning and blinded and their throats raw. And yet fourteen men stepped forward and offered to "see the work through."

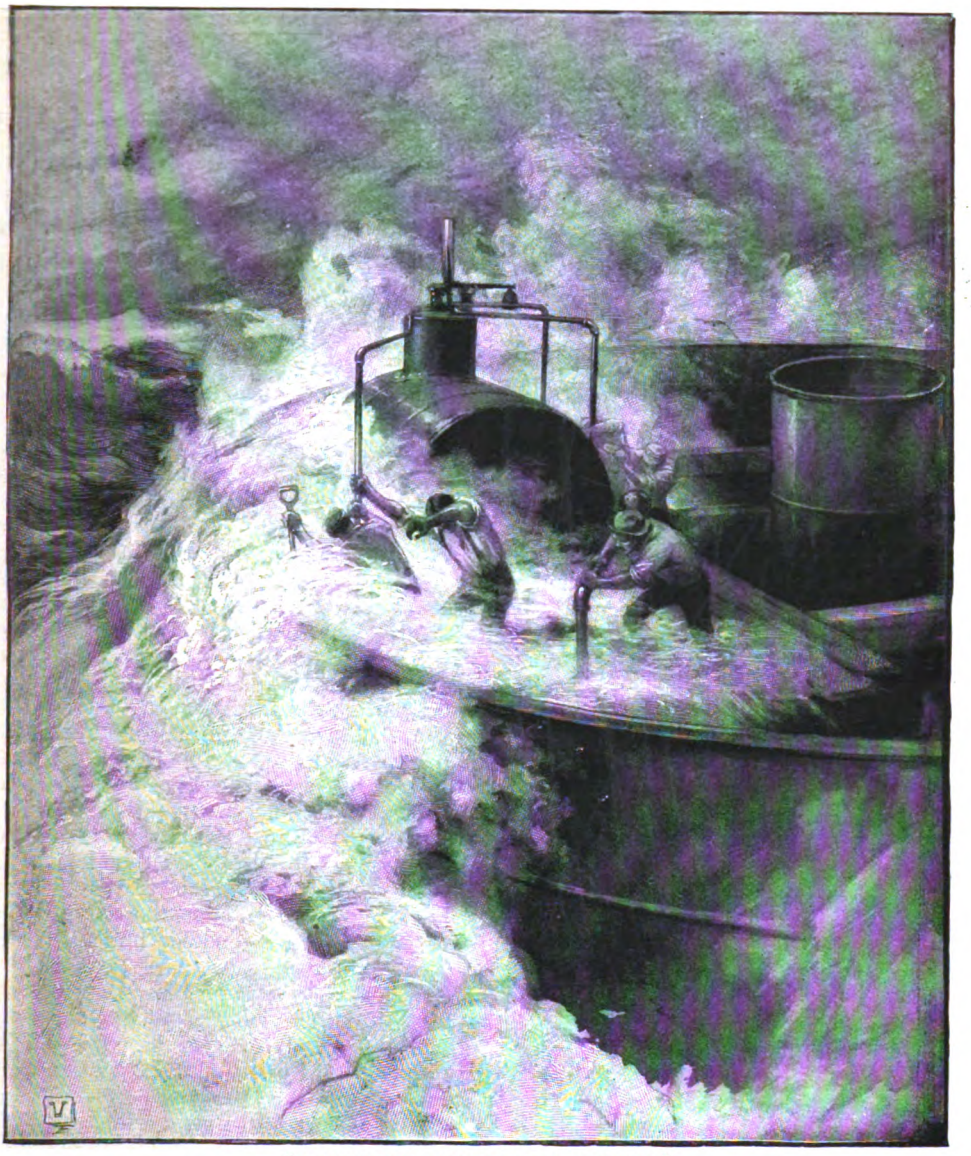
Upon reaching the bottom of the tower they found that the flow of gas was less rapid, and they worked with almost frantic energy, expecting every moment to feel the gas griping in their throats. In half an hour another shift came on, and before night the lighthouse was within an inch or two of its final resting-place.

The last shift was headed by an old caisson man named Griffin, who bore the record of having stood seventy-five pounds of air pressure in the famous Long Island gas-tunnel. Just as the men were ready to leave the caisson the gas suddenly burst up again with something of explosive violence. Instantly the workmen threw down their tools and made a dash for the air-shaft. Here a terrible struggle followed. Only one man could go up the ladder at a time, and they scrambled and fought, pulling down by main force every man who succeeded in reaching the rounds. A moment later they began to stagger apart, blinded by the gas, some of them even striking at the solid walls of the caisson with their bare fists. Then, one after another, they dropped in the sand unconscious. A few of the stronger ones scrambled up the ladder. Griffin, remaining below, had signalled for a rope. When it came down he groped for the nearest workman, fastening it around his body, and sent him aloft. Then he crawled around and pulled the unconscious workmen together under the air-shaft. One by one he sent them up. The last was a powerfully-built Irishman named Howard. Griffin's eyes were blinded, and he was so dizzy that he reeled like a drunken man, but he managed to get the rope around Howard's body and start him up. At the 18in. door of the lock the unconscious Irishman wedged fast, and those outside could not pull him through. Griffin climbed painfully up the 30ft. of ladder, and pushed and pulled until Howard's limp body went through. Griffin tried to follow him, but his numbed fingers slipped on the steel rim, and he slid backward into the death-hole below. They dropped the rope again, but there was no response. One of the men called Griffin by name. The half-conscious caisson man aroused himself and managed to tie the rope under his arms. Then he, too, was hoisted aloft, and when he was dragged from the caisson, more dead than alive, the half-blinded men on the steamer's deck set up a shout of applause—all the credit he ever received.

Two of the men prostrated by the gas were sent to an hospital in New York, where they were months in recovering. Another went insane. Griffin was blind for six weeks. Four other caisson men came out of the work with the painful malady known as "bends," which attacks those who work long under high air pressure. A victim of the "bends" cannot straighten his back, and often his legs and arms are cramped and contorted.

Nor were the men who ran the engine and air-compressor on the top of the cylinder exempt from peril. Twice while the work was in progress great waves dashed entirely over them, so that they had to cling for their lives to the air-pipes. These sudden inundations of cold water also had the effect of cooling the boiler and reducing steam so that the air-compressor barely moved. If the pressure once failed entirely the men below would go to instant death; and the stokers and engine-man were compelled to make fire when they could hardly keep their places on the boiler platform.

Having sunk the caisson deep enough the



"GREAT WAVES DASHED ENTIRELY OVER THEM."

workmen filled it full of concrete and sealed the top of the air-shaft.

In the meantime a storm had come up, and before the steamer could free itself from its moorings the waves drove it bodily against the cylinder. Eight of the heavy iron plates in the sixth course, each of which was over an inch thick and weighed a ton, were crushed in like so many panes of window-glass. For three weeks in May and June the men lay idle again, awaiting the coming of new plates. It seemed impossible that the tower could be completed within the year, and yet, so thoroughly had the builder prepared for emergencies, that within twenty-four days after the new plates were in place the lightkeeper's home had been completed and the lantern was ready for lighting. Three days within the contract year the tower was formally turned over to the Government.

The Captain of the 'Aphrodite.'

By Elmore Elliott Peake.

ONE hour after midnight a yawl, rigged with a square sail and containing seven or eight dark figures, moved slowly and silently out of the harbour of Brunswick, Georgia. Not a word was spoken or scarcely a movement made until one of the figures, leaning lazily against the side of the boat, with his knees drawn up in front, deliberately lit a cigarette. The yellow flame momentarily revealed a young, refined face, touched with daring and fearlessness. Then all was dark again.

"Heave that young fool overboard if he makes another break like that, and pinch the coal off that coffin-tack!" angrily commanded a coarse, suppressed voice from the tiller in the stern.

A heavy man that sat next to the "young fool," and seemed not amenable to the skipper's orders, merely chuckled. None of the others made any move either, while the young smoker calmly puffed away. Thereupon the skipper dipped up a quart cup of salt water and deftly quenched the glowing coal himself, at the same time washing the face and soaking the shirt-front of the smoker. The latter neither moved nor spoke. He quietly tossed the drenched cigarette over his shoulder into the water, drew a gleaming revolver from his pocket, and laid it across his knees; after which he took out a fresh cigarette and leisurely lighted it. The big man at his side again chuckled.

"What's the use of sneakin' out of the harbour at midnight, if you are goin' to run fireworks?" demanded the skipper, in a voice of impotent passion. "When I bargained to haul you two fellows out o' this fever-hole and land you safe and sound in Savannah, I thought you had some respect for *my* rights. When every railroad train was tied up out o' Brunswick, and you found out that every cow-path into Savannah was shot-gun quarantined, you was glad enough to have me take you."

"You are getting your price," answered the young man, in a low, musical voice, and one could have wagered, from the tone, that he was smiling.

"My price didn't cover gettin' hauled up with a shot across my bows from a revenoo cutter and landed in a pesthouse for ten days, for runnin' in fever refugees," growled the skipper.

"Not *refugees*, Daggett," said the other, pleasantly. "*Refugee* implies haste and fright. We leave Brunswick at the command of our chief, quietly and decorously, in the *Pedro No.* 2. But that is a much more reasonable, a much more gentlemanly protest than you made before, with that quart cup. If this cigarette jeopardizes our safety, or yours, I will forego the pleasure, though I am dead for a smoke."

"Well, it does," said Daggett, gruff but mollified. The next moment the cigarette disappeared in the dark water with a faint instantaneous hiss.

The boat crept along under the light night breeze, taking what is known as the "inland" course, which lies between the low, marshy mainland on the left, and the long, narrow "sea-islands" on the right, beyond which lies the broad Atlantic. After about an hour it grew darker, the wind freshened, and a misty rain began to powder the boat and its occupants. The skipper, who seemed still in a savage mood, uttered a low, vehement curse at this turn of the weather, and then returned to his dogged silence. The thickening gloom soon blotted out the low headlands by which he was steering; the wind continued to strengthen until the water was sharply slapping the yawl's broadsides; and in less than twenty minutes they were driving furiously along in pitchy blackness, their sail reduced to a mere ribbon.

"A bottle of ink would be lucidity itself, compared with this, Markley," said the young fellow to the heavy man next to him.

"Hanged if I see how he steers," returned Markley, who had not chuckled for some time.

"I don't do it with my *eyes*," said Daggett, with a touch of rough pride.

For half an hour there was silence again, at the end of which time the waves, on which the boat was dancing like a nutshell, had perceptibly increased in violence. So much water was shipped that one man had to bale continuously.

"I didn't suppose it ever got as rough as this on these shallow sounds," observed the young passenger, as an extra heavy wave drenched him to the skin.

"There's lots of things that some people never supposes," commented Daggett, ungraciously.

"Is it often as rough?" asked the other, significantly.

"Not often," growled the skipper.

"Is it *ever* as rough?" he demanded, with distinct suspicion now.

The skipper was silent a moment, and then he answered, with something like a grin in his tones: "Seein' as you seem to know so much about it, Mr. Hutchinson, I don't mind tellin' you that it *ain't*."

"Which means that we've been blown out to sea?"

"We ain't been blowed in to land."

All night long they tossed on the troubled bosom of the deep, wet and chilled. If a watery grave stared them in the face, no one was unkind enough to speak of the fact. The wind fell about four o'clock, and when the day broke, bright and clear, they were surrounded by a hummocky desert of water, with no land in sight. But less than five miles away lay a long white hull, glistening in the sunlight like a shaft of polished steel. A long trail of smoke lay behind it. All eyes were turned in that direction, and then Daggett ordered the sail hoisted again, that they might be seen more easily.

"She'll see us soon enough, though, I guess," he grumbled. "For if my eyes hain't as useless as two bungholes in one end of a bar'l, that's the revenoo cutter. Still, I don't know what in tar she's-doin' out here, when she's supposed to be guardin' Savanhay agen fever refugees. She sees us already," he added. "She's puttin' about."

"Revenue cutter or no revenue cutter," said Hutchinson, "not a word about Brunswick, or back they'll dump us into this mudscow. We are working down the coast from Savannah, fishing. Remember that."

"A likely enough yarn, too," said Daggett, with an ironical grin. "We got so much tackle with us."

"We threw it overboard to lighten the boat," retorted Hutchinson.

As the stranger bore swiftly and gracefully down upon them it soon became apparent, in spite of Daggett's reference to his eyes, that she was not the revenue cutter. She had the appearance, rather, of a private yacht; and when she came to a stop within ten yards of them this opinion was further strengthened by the trimness and completeness everywhere in evidence. After a short parley between Hutchinson and a uniformed officer who leaned over the polished brass rail—in which Hutchinson accounted for their predicament so adroitly that Markley winked at Daggett—permission was given them to come aboard.

Hutchinson, the first man up, was barely over the rail when, to his amazement, a couple of stout sailors seized him and quickly encircled his wrists with a pair of cold irons. The rest of the party, as they ascended one by one, met with a similar startling reception. For a moment even Hutchinson's presence of mind failed him; then, catching sight of Markley's woebegone face, he burst into a ringing laugh.

"Cheer up, old man!" said he. "Our

"A COUPLE OF STOUT SAILORS SEIZED HIM AND QUICKLY ENCIRCLED HIS WRISTS WITH A PAIR OF COLD IRONS."

throats are safe, I guess, unless they should attempt to choke us with a double-sized breakfast, which I am in hopes they will. Mr. Mate," turning to the officer, with a humorous grin, "if it is not asking too much of a host, would you kindly explain the drift of these hospitalities?"

"I don't think they need much explanation," answered the mate. "If they do, the captain will make it."

He led the way below at once, into a warm, richly-furnished saloon, the luxuriousness of which did more, apparently, to awe Daggett and his rough crew than the irons on their wrists, which they wore with considerable equanimity, and even familiarity.

"Send the captain in, then," said Hutchinson, dropping into a comfortable chair.

"The captain is not up yet," quietly answered the mate, who was a grave man of forty or thereabouts.

"Don't disturb him on our account," said Hutchinson, with mock humility. "But after he has breakfasted—and smoked—I should like the favour of a short interview. That reminds me that our cook on the yawl got up rather late this morning, too, and he was just skinning our quail when we received your invitation to come aboard."

"You will be fed shortly," said the mate, obstinately refusing to smile, though everybody else was in a broad grin.

At breakfast the prisoners' handcuffs were removed and their place taken by five natty sailors, armed with carbines. After the meal, which was ridiculously sumptuous for prisoners, and to which everybody did ample justice, especially Daggett's men, they returned to the saloon, where they resumed their irons and were left alone. Hutchinson, who suspected that the arrest might not be entirely unjust, sharply questioned Daggett; but the old man most solemnly declared that it was a "cussed, high-handed, piratin' outrage" on innocent men.

In about an hour the mate appeared again, and announced that the captain would see the leader, whoever he was.

"That's either you or I, Daggett," said Hutchinson, drolly.

"You go," said Daggett, a little uneasily. "You got the gift o' gab in a higher degree than me."

Hutchinson arose, and followed the mate out. In the main saloon, through which they passed, sat half-a-dozen stylish young women—society girls beyond a doubt—and as many young men. From their curious, expectant faces, they had evidently been awaiting the prisoner's appearance; and a little ripple of excitement swept over them at his gentlemanly and refined aspect. Hutchinson flushed momentarily at their unexpected presence; then, gaining possession of himself immediately, he passed them with an open, half-mischievous smile, looking them squarely in the eyes. One little woman in an exquisite yachting costume so far forgot herself as to give him back a coquettish glance.

At the captain's room the mate threw open the polished walnut door, stood aside while Hutchinson entered, and then shut himself outside. At a little roller-top desk sat a well-built, fresh-faced, independent-looking young woman of probably twenty-two, with a most glorious head of dark auburn hair. Over her shirt-waist she wore a tight-fitting jacket of navy blue, of which material her skirt was also made. A cap, denoting her rank in gold letters, lay on the top of the desk. For a moment she made a pretence of writing, though Hutchinson saw well enough that her steady blue eye was slightly dilated with excitement.

"I beg your pardon," said he, "but I am looking for the captain. Or, rather, he is looking——"

"I am the captain," interrupted the young woman, haughtily, as if rebuking his easy manner.

The tone wounded him. Without attempting to hide the indignation that kindled in his eyes, he looked at her gravely and steadily, until she stirred uneasily in her chair, and, to hide her embarrassment, pressed back the hair from her brow with a hand very small and white.

"What have you to say?" she asked, forced at last to speak first. Her tone was considerably gentler.

"Nothing," said he, with dignity. "I am not in the habit of responding to such a contemptuous tone as you have just seen fit to use. If your excuse for it was *these*," holding aloft his irons, "I would call your attention to the fact that they were put there unlawfully and by force, presumably at your order."

Her soft, beautiful eyes filled with surprise, and an added colour, that might have been the blood of shame, crept into her cheeks. "I cannot discuss a point of etiquette with you," said she, politely, but with a proper reserve.

"I don't ask that," said he. "I merely insist on the courtesy due me from a woman of your evident breeding."

Again she looked at him with curious, puzzled eyes. Her humiliation was so evident that he pressed the question no further.

"Would you be kind enough to tell me what you intend to do with us?" he asked.

"I intend to deliver you to the police at Savannah," said she, without flinching.

"On what charge?"

"Don't you know?" she asked, earnestly, looking with something like pain into his clear, ingenuous eye. Perhaps the depravity that she fancied lurked behind that innocent veil shocked her sensitive woman's nature.

"No more than the man in the moon," said he.

She lifted a telegram from her desk. "Two days ago, at Cumberland Island, a tender and some hunting and fishing traps were stolen from this yacht. This telegram is from the chief of police at Fernandina: 'Your boat and goods undoubtedly stolen by Seaweed Daggett and gang. They own sloop *Pedro* and yawl *Pedro No.* 2. Have gone back to Georgia waters, out of my jurisdiction. Run them down if you can. If they resist, shoot them. Well-dressed young crook, stranger to us, offered some of your goods for sale here. Is probably with gang now.'" She folded the telegram and looked at Hutchinson for an answer.

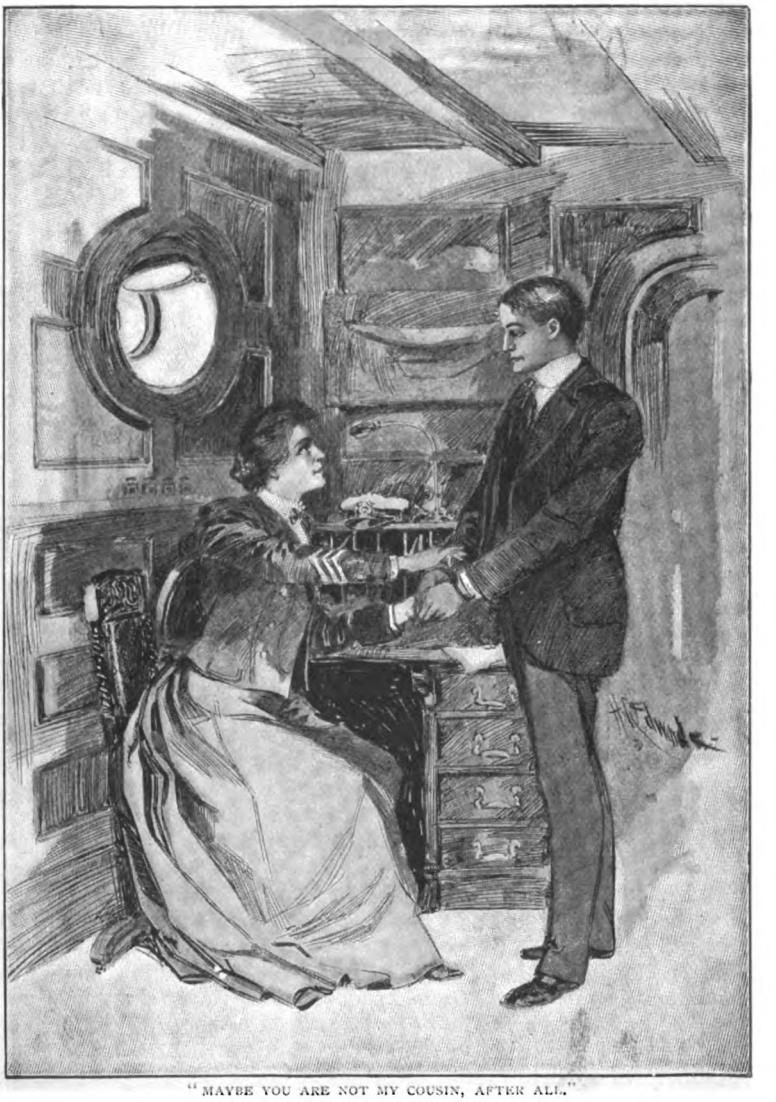
After a moment's thought he asked, quietly: "What may I call you?"

"My name is Virginia Powers," she answered.

At the answer he started so perceptibly that she asked, curiously: "Is there anything strange about it?"

"No," said he; "but, Miss Powers, I should like to ask you if I look like a 'well-dressed young crook'?" He looked her so boldly and confidently in the eyes that she drew back a little with maidenly reserve as she answered: "You don't look like a liar, either; yet you told my mate you left Savannah yesterday morning in that yawl, when I know, by my own eyes, that it lay at Fernandina at eight o'clock yesterday morning."

Hutchinson flushed, yet not exactly like a guilty man. After studying the carpet a moment—or possibly the toe of the fair captain's little tan shoe—he said: "Miss Powers, this is a strange coincidence. I know your uncle, Jonathan West. I have



"MAYBE YOU ARE NOT MY COUSIN, AFTER ALL."

heard something of his unwillingness for you to go cruising around in a yacht, in this independent manner. I am well acquainted with your cousin, Bartley Hutchinson. I worked with him on the *San Francisco Examiner*. I saw him off at the station when he came East, ostensibly to visit you. I, perhaps, am the only man who knew that he, from certain reports he had received, regarded you as a coquette; and that his intention, in spite of your uncle's kind invitation, was to stop off at New York, and secure a position on a paper there—which intention he carried out. He was almost immediately sent South to handle the yellow fever epidemic at Brunswick."

Miss Powers at first flushed scarlet, but when he finished she was pale. "Believe me," said she, in a voice trembling with indignation, "that I was no party to my uncle's invitation to Bartley Hutchinson. And at the very hour when he was to arrive at our home in Newport I was one hundred miles away in this yacht. But I do not see how this concerns you," said she, catching herself. "However much I may admire Mr. Hutchinson's bravery in exposing himself to fever, if he would make public such a story as that about his own cousin I cannot imagine him a man who is very choice about his associates. I cannot see how this story clears *you*."

"Only this—I am Bartley Hutchinson," said he, laughing.

"It is impossible!" she exclaimed, straightening back.

"No—simply strange," said he, enjoying her discomfiture.

"Then why are you with this band of thieves—for thieves I am confident they are. And why—oh, why did you lie about Savannah?" she asked, reproachfully, blushing for him.

"Before I tell you, wouldn't it be a little more - cousinly to remove these?" he asked, holding up his manacled hands.

She lifted a key from the desk, and inserted it in the lock of one of the bracelets. "Maybe you are not my cousin, after all," said she, pausing prudently, but half-ashamed of her doubts.

"I should be sorry to think not," said he; and she, flushing a little, set him free.

Briefly, he told her that he and his fellow-correspondent had been ordered home by their superiors, on the almost complete depopulation of Brunswick by flight from the fever. He explained the necessity of leaving clandestinely, in order to escape detention at the first line of quarantine, and pointed out the superiority of the water route over any other.

"I knew Daggett's unsavoury reputation," he concluded, "and haven't a doubt that he stole your tender. But it was Daggett or nobody."

"Then you may be inoculated with yellow fever germs now," she said, with wide-open eyes.

"Yes."

"Aren't you afraid?"

"Aren't *you?*" he asked.

"I nursed papa until he died with the small-pox," said she, simply. And Bartley, as he gazed musingly at her modestly averted eyes and the sweet, firm lips, wondered if he had made such a brilliant move, after all, when he passed Newport by.

"But I forget that you fled from me," said she, with sudden reserve. "I shall land you at Savannah as soon as possible, but we have to go to Port Royal first. Two of our party go North by rail from there. It won't take *much* longer."

"You also forget that *you* fled from *me*," said Bartley, smiling at this truly feminine exhibition.

"You are a man," said she, as though that ended it. "There was no excuse for you."

"Why?" he asked, amused.

"Because, if you didn't—if you didn't like me, you could have left me."

"And if you didn't like me, couldn't *you* have left?" he asked.

"My own home—and you a guest?" she asked, arching her smooth, glossy brows in surprise. "No—I can never forgive you for that," she added, tragically.

"This is ridiculous, Cousin Virginia," said he. "I had never seen you then, not even your picture. I didn't know whether you were tall or short, blonde or brune. I came South simply as the result of a foolish desire to get into a fever camp, more than to escape you. I am vastly sorry now that I did it, I can tell you."

"I accept your apology, of course," said Virginia, demurely, quietly overlooking his little compliment. "But you mustn't expect me to treat you just as I should have done otherwise — not yet." She paused, while Bartley, fearful of hurting her pride, repressed a smile. "I don't know how to introduce you here," said she, in perplexity. "Your being my cousin, and coming with these dreadful men, is nothing. But they—some of them—know something about that—other thing."

"Are you a woman who would make such

a story public about your own cousin?" he demanded, severely, and she, in her perturbation, did not see that he was only mimicking her.

"I—I—they found it out," she faltered.

No one would have suspected such weakness in her though when, her cheek as cool and white as the petal of a lily, she introduced Hutchinson to the party, without mentioning their cousinship, as they had agreed.

All day she stood more or less on her dignity with him, while he quietly studied her and abided his time. He feared once — when she ordered a portion of the deck scrubbed that seemed scarcely to need it—that she was mannish. But when the same young sailor smashed his finger under the holystone, and she, instantly forgetting her rank, gave a little cry of sympathy and wrapped the wounded member in her own handkerchief, with her own hands, he took it all back.

He discovered, further, that she was captain in fact as well as in name. The mate clearly respected her seamanship, and cheerfully looked to her for orders. Bartley secretly held him in contempt for this, but that was nothing against Virginia. That she was a little puffed-up with her nautical knowledge was undeniable; but she carried it off in such a pretty way—being a woman — that Markley did little else all day than breathe foolish, old-bachelor remarks about her into Bartley's ear.

"HE DISCOVERED, FURTHER, THAT SHE WAS CAPTAIN IN FACT AS WELL AS IN NAME."

The wind, which had veered around sharply to the north-east about ten o'clock, strengthened all day long. By four o'clock it was blowing furiously, and the *Aphrodite*, whose course held her squarely in the trough of the sea, rose and fell under the foam-crested ridges of water like a porpoise at play. Every square inch of her deck and upper works had been wet thrice over by the flying salt spray, which cut the flesh like whiplashes. The sailors, in their oilskins and sou'-westers, fighting their way forward in the teeth of the gale, streamed with water.

Below, everything was snug and warm. The motion, though, was too violent for the comfort of most of the guests. Captain Powers sat apart from them, with the mate, in her own room, from which she could see what went on outside. She was a little pale from the tension, but perfectly composed. The mate, however, was decidedly nervous—at least, so Bartley Hutchinson decided as he entered the room.

"Miss Powers, far be it from me to interfere with the handling of this yacht," said he, "but Daggett, who was born and raised in these waters, says this is their annual Gulf storm, and that it will continue until twelve or one o'clock to-night, by which time the wind may gain a velocity of eighty miles an hour. If all goes well, we'll be safe at Port Royal long before that; but in this heavy sea the derangement of machinery or steering-gear is more than a possibility. Daggett suggests that you steer for shore, which will give you the wind over your quarter, and ease the boat. You can then make Port Royal by the inland course."

"And get aground in those shallows?" asked the mate, sarcastically.

"Daggett says he can put you into the inland course without difficulty, and take you through it," continued Bartley, without vouchsafing the mate a glance; "and, thief that he is, I believe him."

The captain hesitated, and after some talk asked of the mate: "What do you think, Mr. Kennedy?"

"I think that if we always counted on a shaft breaking we should never put to sea at all."

"Brave talk, Mr. Kennedy," said Hutchinson, sharply, "but if a shaft *does* break, how many of these helpless lives will you agree to save? Miss Powers, I most earnestly protest against any foolhardiness in this matter. You have no right to risk either your own life or those of your guests in order to show your courage or the seaworthiness of your yacht. Certainly you have no excuse for remaining out here, twenty miles from shore, in a blow that is likely to reach a fatal velocity."

"Put about!" said Virginia to the mate. After he had left to execute her order she said to Bartley: "He thinks you are a coward."

"I *know* he's one," said Bartley, stoutly. "He's afraid to be prudent." And he turned on his heel.

Six miles from shore, where the mud from the shallow bottom began to discolour the water, Daggett, after being unironed, took the wheel. Darkness had already set in, and the rain was falling in driving sheets. Reluctant as Hutchinson was to leave his cosy quarters, where he and Markley were smoking and spinning yarns, he called for an oilskin and made his way to the wheel-house, after shoving his revolver in an outside pocket. Daggett's loyalty would bear watching.

To his surprise he found his cousin in the wheel-house, wrapped to the throat, the heavy, moist coils of her hair glistening with drops of rain. She glanced at him inquiringly, as he entered, but said nothing; and for some time they stood in silence, listening to the wild roar of the storm.

"Is it necessary for you to stay here and get wet?" he asked, finally, in a low tone that Daggett could not overhear.

"Someone has to stay here—he does not understand the signals to the engine-room," said she, in the same guarded tone. "I couldn't be content inside, anyway," she added, less stiffly. "Why are *you* here?"

Bartley nodded toward Daggett's big bulk. "I have decided to go North from Port Royal," said he, after a moment. "You will have to take your prisoners to Savannah, though, to deliver them to the Georgia authorities. I don't know when we shall meet again, and I may not see you alone again, here on the yacht. I should like to know that I am forgiven before I go. We are cousins, you know." He spoke gravely enough, though there was a whimsical twinkle in his eyes.

"You are making fun of me," said she, with sober prettiness.

"And I should like you to say that you are sorry you ran away from me," he continued, not heeding her complaint, "as I say now I am sorry that I ran away from you."

"Do you suppose I would wait to see a man who boasts that no woman ever yet stirred his pulse?" she asked, indignantly.

He laughed softly, for that had been his idle boast, but only asked: "Do you suppose I would cross a continent to see a woman who boasts that no man has ever been in her presence over fifteen minutes without making something of a fool of himself?"

She flushed a little, and then laughed musingly. "Was *that* the reason?" she asked, in a softer tone, coyly turning her eyes up to his.

"No other," said he. "I can never make *my* boast again," he added, subtly.

"Take care that I can't make mine," she returned, warningly, turning her head to glance out on to the tumultuous bosom of the enraged deep. After a moment she went on, in a subdued tone: "Cousin Bartley, if you are jesting with me, there is something sacrilegious in it at this moment, when God is displaying His awful majesty in this storm, yet holding us secure, as in the hollow of His hand." She sank down upon the seat, and pulled her wrap a little closer. The act left her white, damp hand exposed, and Bartley laid his own upon it.

"Just to show that I am not jesting, Virginia," said he, seriously.

She let him have his way, and when, after a little, he slipped his fingers under the soft palm and gently tightened his hold, she gave him a little pressure in return.

Meanwhile Daggett was bending at the wheel and straining his eyes out over the black, watery waste. The occasional flashes of lightning, which simply blinded Bartley, were as welcome to him as beacon lights. Finally, without warning, he threw the wheel heavily to port; and just as the anxious captain sprang to her feet in alarm he announced, "Inside!" in a tone that betrayed considerable pride in the fact.

The low island behind which they now crept along at one-third speed effectually shielded them from the mighty in-rolling billows of the ocean; but the wind still roared over them like the hoarse bellowing of a thousand angry sea-monsters, and the shallow water of the passage was whipped

into a foam. The rain had ceased to fall, and the sky was growing lighter. Their troubles seemed to be at an end, and Virginia had just drawn a long breath of relief, when a most terrific shock spread over the vessel, throwing both her and Bartley with great violence against the wheel and Daggett.

"Snappin' Turtle Roost!" cried Daggett, aghast, dropping the wheel and turning to them.

"Daggett," said Hutchinson, quickly, his hand in his outside pocket and his eyes gleaming dangerously, "if I thought this was intentional, I'd make a snapping turtle roost out of your skull."

"I've been a-watchin' for it," protested Daggett. "It ought to be more'n four feet above water at this tide, but this wind has drove the water in so it fooled me."

There was no time for dispensing justice. The yacht was rapidly filling from the great hole in her bow. Still, the water was scarcely deep enough, Daggett said, to more than wash her hurricane deck when she should have settled to the bottom; consequently, the terrors of a wreck at sea were not present. With it all, though, there was danger, and no time to be lost. Quickly, but coolly, the boats were lowered; the passengers, with what light valuables they could readily pick up, were handed down. The two large boats of the *Aphrodite* were thus loaded and vanished in the darkness. Then Daggett's yawl was brought alongside. Daggett and four of his men, three of the *Aphrodite's* crew, and the mate, Bartley, and Virginia—all that were left aboard—made ready to descend. Daggett, with a grotesque bow to the captain, requested that his men be unironed, in view of the possibility of their having yet to swim; and the captain ordered the mate to release them. The smugglers at once tumbled down, followed by the sailors and the mate. Bartley had just taken hold of Virginia's hand to help her down, when he found himself looking into the muzzle of Daggett's heavy revolver. The mate and the sailors, at the same instant, found themselves similarly situated.

"HE FOUND HIMSELF LOOKING INTO THE MUZZLE OF DAGGETT'S HEAVY REVOLVER."

"Fall on your faces in the bottom of the

boat, and don't move till you're ordered!" commanded Daggett, with a triumphant grin, and his victims discreetly obeyed, the mate, perhaps, the most promptly of all.

"Are you going to leave us here to drown?" demanded Bartley, as Daggett cut the painter and pushed off.

"You won't drown," said Daggett. "You'll have standing-room until the mate here can get back to you with one o' your boats. If you don't want to wait, there's your tender."

The pair stood still until the night and the storm had swallowed the yawl. If the yacht settled evenly they would be safe. Yet it might be hours before they were taken off. The island on their right was only a few rods distant; but it was destitute of any shelter, and the boats had made for the mainland, a mile away.

"Are you afraid to go with me in the tender?" asked Bartley.

"No," she said, steadily.

Five minutes later the little tender, with its two souls aboard, was dancing over the choppy water. Bartley pulled a fair oar, but in spite of his efforts the frail craft took on water at both bow and stern, and Virginia steadily baled.

"Can you swim, Virginia?" he asked.

"Yes," she said, without looking up.

She had need of her accomplishment. Three successive waves came combing over the stern, drenching her through and through, and then they found themselves in water to their waists. Following Bartley's example, Virginia threw herself over the side, and for a moment they supported themselves by a hand on the gunwale.

"They can never hear us call in this wind," gasped Bartley; "and we may chill to death before they find us. The shore can't be very far now. Can you swim for it?" he asked, anxiously.

She bravely answered "Yes," and they struck off side by side. He soon saw, though, that her skirts were proving a fatal drag to her. Swimming a little closer, he commanded her to put her arms around him; and she, too weary to think for herself, blindly obeyed.

"Tighter!" he exclaimed. "Hold yourself against me so tightly that the water can't run between us, and I'll do the rest. There!" as she obediently hugged him closer. "Now lie perfectly still."

He swam slowly, depending in part upon the wind and waves for momentum, and reserving his strength for any emergency. With every stroke of his left hand, which was made over her shoulder as he swam on his side, Virginia's long, wet hair wrapped itself around his hand in clinging strands. He made no effort to put it out of the way. The smooth folds slipping over his hand soothed him, and he swam on mechanically, as though it were only for the sake of the unconscious caress. The fair owner's head lay on his bosom, her eyes closed. Not once did she move or speak, nor wince when an unusually heavy wave would break over them.

At last Bartley felt the tops of rushes. With a good bottom he could have waded thence, but he felt too tired to "let down" to ascertain whether mud or sand were under them. The chances were it was mud, so he swam on. When dry land was finally reached—though it was far from dry—he was too exhausted to lift himself out at once; but with his feet washed by the waves, and his head pillowed on the cold, wet marsh grass, and his own arms now doubling the bond that bound him to Virginia, he lay perfectly content. A bed of down could not have made him more so. An intense desire to sleep came over him, but this he resolutely shook off.

"Virginia!" said he, for she, too, seemed stricken with the unnatural sleep.

"Yes," she murmured, sleepily, and straightway dozed off again.

"Wake up, Virginia, wake up!" he called, smiling at her childlike reluctance to move. Again she stirred restlessly, and then settled peacefully back to sleep. She looked so sweet, so tired and helpless, so trustful, that he was loth to disturb her again. Her mouth, so straight and firm and womanly in her waking moments, was now in a ruby, baby crescent. Her arms were still tightly around him. Her hair straggled across her temple and cheek. As he looked at the tempting picture he wondered if it would be lawful to touch those unconscious lips—just simply touch them. He decided it would not be—if he were not her cousin.

"Virginia, girl!" said he, shaking her. "You must get up. The train leaves in just twenty minutes."

She quickly opened her eyes at this, and stared up into his face, startled and bewildered. Then, seeming partly to comprehend their situation, she asked, plaintively: "Where are we, Bartley?"

"Safe and sound, on shore," he answered, blithely.

"And the *Aphrodite* is gone!" she murmured, with tears in her eyes.

"Not a bit of it! Once she is pumped out and raised, she'll be as good as ever."

"How wicked of me to think of a boat when *we* are safe!" she exclaimed, penitently. "Bartley, you are a noble boy!" she added, fervently. "You saved me."

"What less could a cousin do, Virginia?" he asked, smiling, but with glistening eyes.

"And being my cousin, I love you for it, and want to show my gratitude." And she showed it by wrapping her round arms about his neck, and softly kissing him. "I forgive you everything."

As Virginia and Bartley sat side by side in the luxurious seat of a sleeping-car the next day, flying North as fast as steam could carry them, she said: "Bartley Hutchinson, if you were to receive another invitation to come and visit your cousin, do you think you would succeed in seeing her?"

"Yes, I think I should—seeing that her yacht is lying in the mud off Snapping Turtle Roost," he answered, laughing. "Try me."

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"TWENTY MINUTES LATER THEY WERE STEAMING BEFORE A BLAZING FIRE."

Twenty minutes later they were steaming before a blazing fire in the little cabin of a negro truck-gardener, while the worthy black himself and his two boys were traversing the sedgy shore with lanterns to find the other boatloads. In less than an hour they were all in, wet and cold, but happy. The two prisoners that had come ashore in the first boat were set free, as long as their leader had escaped.

"I'm afraid you wouldn't feel free to leave me now, in case you didn't like me," said she.

"No, I'm afraid I sha'n't feel free to leave you, Virginia, dear," said he.

Virginia was very, very quiet for several minutes, and then she said, softly: "At school I used to write in my copy-book, 'Never trouble trouble, till trouble troubles you.'"

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

LIX.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

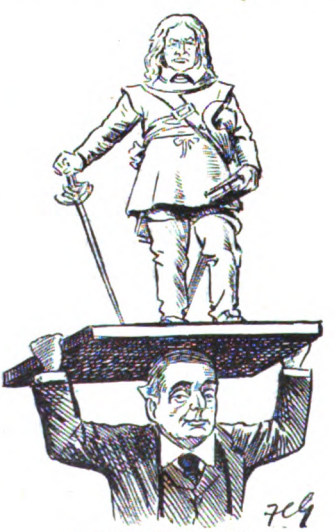
HOW THEY BROUGHT THE NEWS TO GOTHENBURG.

EHEU! fugaces. It is five years ago this very month of June that Lord Rosebery's Government was blown out of office by a cordite explosion in the House of Commons. It chanced that on the night this befell, Mr. Gladstone and a considerable number of members of the last Parliament in which he sat were far away from Westminster. They had gone to attend the opening of the Kiel Canal, and were homeward bound when the momentous news was flashed under sea. The *Tantallon Castle*, with Mr. Gladstone and other members of either House on board, was at Gothenburg when the telegram came. It was in fragmentary form, and so oddly mixed up with announcement made on the same evening by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman that the Duke of Cambridge had been induced to retire from the post of Commander-in-Chief, that defeat of the Government seemed a consequential event.

That a Government having got rid of the Duke should straightway get rid of itself was explicable only on the principle of the Japanese hari-kari. However, that was all we could make out in Gothenburg, and had to possess our souls in patience till the *Tantallon Castle* slowed up off Gravesend, and Sir Donald Currie's agent came on board with an armful of newspapers.

A CORDITE EXPLOSION.

There was a tremendous rush for them by the passengers, only Mr. Gladstone appearing indifferent. For more than sixty years he had lived in the vortex of public life. Now, whether Ministries stood or fell, whether Parliaments were dissolved or went their way, was a matter of minor interest to him. Of much more moment was his study of the Danish language undertaken since, ten days earlier, the *Tantallon Castle* slowly crept out of the foggy Thames into the open sea. It was with difficulty Mr. Gladstone could be made to select a journal from the heap. He walked off with it under his arm with an almost bored look upon his face. In the cabin men were thronging round any so fortunate to have an open newspaper in his hand. For Mr. Gladstone the news would keep till he got to his state cabin.



THE CROMWELL STATUE.

OLIVER CROMWELL.

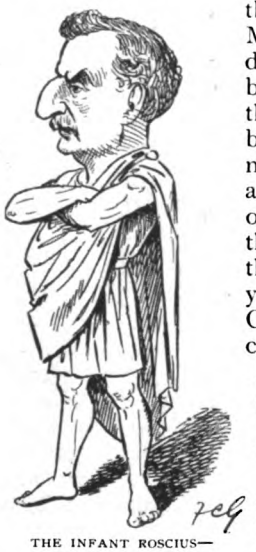
Another echo from Westminster that reached the *Tantallon Castle*, this earlier time at anchor at Kiel, related to the statue of Oliver Cromwell, again in the current Session the subject of animated debate in the

House of Commons. Mr. Herbert Gladstone, in 1895 First Commissioner of Works, submitted with the Civil Service Estimates a small sum on account of erecting a statue to the Lord Protector within the precincts of Parliament. It was hotly opposed by Mr. Justin McCarthy, then leading the Irish Nationalist Party.

As Mr. Arthur Balfour was reminded last February, when his own First Commissioner of Works was charged with having found a public site for a Cromwell statue, the Irish members five years ago received powerful support from the then Leader of the Opposition and his followers. So effective was the onslaught that, the vote having been carried by a bare majority, the Government hastily abandoned the project, not to be revived till Mr. Balfour and the gentlemen who conscientiously voted against it in 1895 came into power.

At Kiel the late Speaker, Lord Peel, came on board the *Tantallon Castle* to pay his respects to Mr. Gladstone. They had not met for some time. The air was electrical with the buzzing of great events at home and on the Continent.

"And what do you think he talked about?" Lord Peel asked me when he left the state room where Mr. Gladstone had for fully ten minutes been earnestly conversing. "Why! about Oliver Cromwell."



THE INFANT ROSCIUS—MR. W. REDMOND.

At the luncheon table the same day Mr. Gladstone was still full of the subject. "I am not sure," he said, "that if I had been in the House I should have voted with Herbert for the statue. I admit that Cromwell was one of the biggest men who wielded power in this country. Never actually King, no crowned monarch has exceeded the measure of his autocracy. The blot on his character I can never overlook or forgive was the Irish massacres. I hold that the Irish members were fully justified in their opposition to the vote."

An opposition, as we have seen, renewed five years later under those altered circumstances, recurrence of which endear the House of Commons to the mind of the student of mankind.

In the interesting speech in which Mr. Balfour this year justified what five years ago he had hotly and indignantly denounced he spoke disrespectfully of Carlyle's monumental work on Cromwell. In this view he was at one with Mr. Gladstone. "Carlyle's Cromwell," said the old man eloquent, "is a piece of pure fetichism."

TREES FOR THE TERRACE.

The Terrace of the House of Commons maintained this Session its favour in the eyes of London Society. It certainly has many claims to pre-eminence in that field. It is secluded, though accessible. The scene up and down the river, with Lambeth Palace flooded in the light of the setting sun, is exceedingly beautiful. Some of the men, sitting at tables, strolling about, or leaning on the wall of the Terrace, bear the best-known names in England. Moreover, for ladies, wives and daughters of members or their bosom friends, there is, whilst they sip tea and toy with strawberries, a certain subtle consciousness that they are, in degree, assisting at the making of laws and of history. At the very moment they, with tea-cup extended towards the hostess, are saying, "Thank you; only one piece, please," Mr. Caldwell may be addressing a crowded House from above the gangway, or that infant Roscius of the Parliamentary stage, Mr. W. Redmond, may be thundering defiance from below it.

For womankind the attractions of the situation are, quite unintentionally, increased by a certain stern, not to say aggressive, line of demarcation. Just as boating on the Thames you come at some quiet spot upon a half-submerged post (generally on the slant) displaying the legend "Danger," so at the eastward end of the Terrace, near the main entrance, upstands a board bearing the strange device, "For members only." No female footstep, however small the imprint, may pass the line marked by this symbol of man's exclusiveness. Here, in haughty solitude, sit the Benedicts of the House of Commons, Colonel Mark Lockwood, Colonel Saunderson, and the like—men who hold that there is a place for everything and that everybody, especially woman, should be in her place.

A NEW STAIRCASE.

It was this spirit of exclusiveness that led to the adoption of what is known as the new staircase. Visitors to Benares will remember how on walking down any of the passages

to the Ganges leading to the ghats, the natives returning shrink back against the wall, lest by accident they should suffer contamination by touch even of the hem of the garment of the unbeliever. In unconscious development of this feeling, a section of members accustomed to frequent the guarded inclosure complained of obstruction on the staircase leading from the Terrace to the corridors and lobbies of the House. Going or coming about the business of the State they were, they complained, hampered by women, who always walked in the middle of the staircase, showing no inclination to "make a gangway."

It was hoped that this objection being pressed would result in the closing against women of this approach to the Terrace. So it did. But the authorities of the House, being all married men, were constrained to meet the difficulty with due regard to the rights of woman. This was done by the costly expedient of making a new staircase, by which cavalier members now escort the fair guests whom they have invited to tea on the Terrace.

THE PEERS' PORTION.

This has an unforeseen advantage. Not only does it land the ladies on the scene at a spot distant from the male inclosure, which it is undesirable further to allude to, but it brings them in closer contiguity to the peers. There are, probably, many members of the House of Commons who are unaware of the fact that the House of Lords share with them the privilege of the Terrace. The western and bleaker end of the long promenade is the patrimony of the peers. They may an' they please—a few do—secure a table in advance, and take tea in solitary dignity. Or they may give little tea parties of their own, just as if they were commoners. As a matter of fact, noble lords frequenting the Terrace at tea-time prefer to join tables set at the liveliest end of the Terrace.

One exception to this rule made memorable the ordinary Session of last year. All of a summer afternoon the Lord High Chancellor was observed presiding at a tea-table round which clustered a dream of fair women. He did not wear his wig and gown, but nothing else was lacking to the grace and dignity with which he managed the large brown teapot necessitated by the breadth of his hospitality.

WHY NOT TREES?

There is one possible and appropriate addition to the attractiveness of the Terrace as a summer evening lounge for tired legislators so obvious, that it is a marvel it has been overlooked. Why should not the long, unlovely length of the flagged pavement be broken up by pots and tubs of flowering shrubs? The resources of Kew Gardens are not exhausted. At trifling expense Sir T. Thistleton Dyer, being duly authorized, could make the Terrace of the House of Commons blossom like the rose. The balustrade overlooking the river seems created for the special purpose of showing how fair are the flowers that bloom in Kew Gardens. On the terraces and by the hall doors of country houses it is a common thing to see masses of colour overtopping big vases. Why should the terrace of the town house of the legislator be left forlorn?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR WIELDING THE TEA-POT.

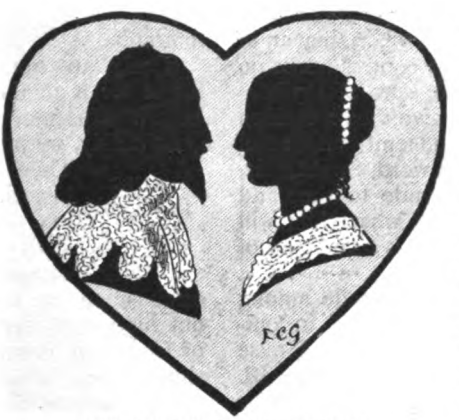
Like the quality of mercy, such a display of foliage and colour overlooking London's greatest highway would be twice blessed, blessing those privileged to frequent the Terrace and those who, passing up and down the river in penny steamers, longingly look on.

UNCONSIDERED TRIFLES.

There lie hidden to-day in a muniment room in Victoria Tower, Westminster, a collection of historical documents whose personal history is not less romantic

than the narratives they record. When, in 1834, fire broke out in the old Palace of Westminster, one of the officers of the House of Lords bethought him of certain bundles of musty papers dumped down in an ancient annex. Tradition had handed down to the staff the impression that these documents were exceedingly valuable, which to the official mind fully accounted for their being hidden away in a cellar. The officer made gallant and successful efforts to save them. Being rescued they straightway fell into their old condition of disregard. While the new Houses of Parliament were being built the bundles were shifted about from shed to shed to suit the convenience of the workmen. When the building was completed the hapless treasure-trove was carted into the basement story of the offices of the House of Lords, which, running parallel with the river at something below its level, was recognised as the very place in which to store precious papers.

More than a quarter of a century later a gentleman engaged upon an historical work asked permission to make search in the House of Lords for any papers bearing upon the subject. He was courteously let loose in this river cellar, and had not been there many days before he discovered a veritable Klondike of papers relating in intimate fashion to some of the most critical and interesting epochs in English history, dating from 1479 to 1664.



CHARLES I. AND HENRIETTA MARIA.

THE LOVE-LETTERS OF A KING AND QUEEN.

In his "History of the Rebellion"—meaning the establishment of the Commonwealth—Lord Clarendon, writing of Naseby fight, reports how "in the end the King was compelled to quit the field, and to leave Fairfax master of all his foot, cannons, and baggage, amongst which was his own cabinet, where his most secret papers were, and letters between the Queen and him." Here, among these unconsidered bundles, treated for centuries as if they had been dirty linen, lay perdue these love-letters passing between the hapless King and his wife Henrietta, whose portraits, limned by the hand of Vandyck, adorned through dark days of the past winter the walls of Burlington House.

The Puritans, with malicious intent, printed and circulated these letters, just as, after the Tuileries was sacked, the correspondence of Napoleon III. and the Empress, found in private chambers, was given to the greedy mob. The French Imperial fugitives did not come so well out of the ordeal as do their seventeenth century predecessors. Charles I. was a bad King, but these letters, lately rescued out of the abyss of centuries, show him in a gentle light. The Queen is equally tender in the dark hour of adversity. Both write in cipher, the secret of which was not withheld from the prying eyes of the Puritans, whose transcript of the letters now lies hidden from the world in the solitude of Victoria Tower.

Queen Henrietta uses the olden French familiar to the readers of Montaigne's Essays. Writing on the 16th of January, 1643, "au Roy Mon Seigneur," from an unnamed place, she says (being translated): "My dear Heart, I made an account to depart yesterday, but the winds were so boisterous that my goods and luggage could not be sent aboard to-day. Howsoever I hope it will be done to-morrow. If the wind serves I mean to be gone on Thursday, God willing. I have so much unexpected business now upon my departure, which causes me to be extremely troubled with the headache, and to make use of another which I would have done myself, but that I have many letters to write into France. Watt being come thence, I shall only tell you that he hath brought me all that I could desire from thence. Farewell, my dear Heart."

KING CHARLES.

"The King my lord," writing from Oxford, "To my Wyfe, 26 March, 1645, by Sakfield," thus discourses, with kingly variety of spelling: "Deare hart, I could not get thy Dispaches wch Petit brought before yesterday wch I red with wonder anufe to fynde thee interpret my letter, marked 16, as if I had not beene well satisfied with something in thy letter by Pooly. I confess that I expressed anger in that letter, but it was by

complaining to thee not of thee, and indeed when I am accused of concealing my Affaires from thee either by negligence or worse I cannot bee well pleased and though I am behoulding to thy love for not believing I am not the more obliged to my accusers' goodwills ; albeit the effects thereof (by thy kyndeness) is most welcome to mee, and certainly I know nothing less in thy power than to make me be displeased with thee : I have beene and am seldom other then angry with myselfe for not expressing my Affection to thee according to my intentions. So far have I alwais beene from taking anything vnkyndly of thee ; as for my desyring thee to keepe my Dispaches it was in particular and not in generall conserning those of Irland, not knowing whether thou thought secrecy in that business so requiset as I know it to be, for many ar of that nature as ar fitt to be showen and wher they ar of an undouted kynde these I confess needs no items ; but where I am not sure of thy concurring opinion there to give thee a causion may show my want of judgemt but not of confidence in thee : In a word, Sweet hart, I cannot be other than kynde to thee and confident of thee ; and say what thou will thou must and does know this to be trew of him who is eternally Thyne."

A ROMANCE OF THE PRAYER-BOOK.

Another discovery made among precious lumber stowed in out-of-the-way chambers in the House of Lords was the long-lost MS. Prayer-book sent to the peers by Charles II., to assist them in compiling the Prayer-book. The volume has a curious history. During the Commonwealth an order was issued abolishing the Book of Common Prayer. One of the first proceedings of Charles II. on the restoration of the monarchy was to appoint a commission to "Review the Book of Common Prayer, comparing the same with the most ancient liturgies which have been used in the Church in the primitive and purest times, and to prepare such alterations and additions as they thought fit to offer." When Parliament passed an Act re-establishing the Church this MS. volume was ordered to be appended thereto.

This condition was observed, and up to the beginning of the century the documents remained intact. One day a clergyman asked and obtained permission to consult the MS. Prayer-book on a doctrinal point that perturbed his soul. The boon was granted by a sympathetic Black Rod. But, alack ! the temptation, greater than any resisted by St. Anthony, proved too much for the holy man. Soon after he had departed it was found the precious volume had also gone. Nothing was heard of it for many years. Whether pricked by conscience the rev. gentleman voluntarily returned the book, or whether, tracked to his sanctum, it was rescued from his felonious grasp, does not appear in the loosely kept records of the day. It is, however, certain that by the year 1819 it was restored. There is record that it was seen and handled in 1824. After the burning of the Houses of Parliament ineffective search was made for it. Some twenty-seven years ago, it being found that the Old Tower at the back of Abingdon Street was inconveniently stuffed with old Acts of Parliament, they were removed to Victoria Tower. Amongst them was found this priceless MS., which has again relapsed into the condition of the forgotten.

Surely an honourable place might be found for it in the manuscript-room of the British Museum, where, albeit through a glass darkly, we might see its face.

KING EDWARD'S PRAYER-BOOK.

There is an elder, even more historic, Prayer-book still a-missing. When in the fifth and sixth year of his reign Edward VI. caused to be passed a statute establishing the Protestant religion throughout his realm, it was ordered that the Book of Common Prayer, concurrently compiled, should be "annexed and joined to this present statute." The precedent was, as we have seen, followed in the reign of Charles II. with equally calamitous results.

When, in 1661, Charles II.'s Commissioners came to look for this Prayer-book it was nowhere to be found. There was the original statute duly preserved, but the Prayer-book had disappeared. There is on record a letter from John Browne, the Clerk of the Parliament in 1683, addressed to one of his colleagues, wherein he writes : "In Q. Marie's tyme the Common Praier Booke which was annexed to the Act was taken away."

The first body of Royal Commissioners on historical MS. (amongst the few survivors are Lord Salisbury and Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) were of opinion that this thrice-precious MS. would some day be found amongst the medley of MSS. judiciously housed in the basement story of the offices of the House of Lords. Has it been found, or has the matter been forgotten in the pressure of business that weighs upon the peers ?

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By George Manville Fenn.

I.

"UGH! what a night we're going to have," I said, as I put down the poker and stood in the warm glow, watching the flames and sparks from the logs fly up the wide chimney.

"Yes," said my wife, raising her eyes from the embroidery she was at work upon, and looking so attractive in the ruddy glow that I stepped to her side and behaved as I did five years before—that is, in the winter before we were married.

"Don't, Tony," she said, smiling.

"Why not, pet?"

"Simmons might come in—or Jack."

"Simmons had better not—a pompous old humbug! Hang him, he gives himself as many airs as if he were the squire and belonged to the Hall. As for Jack, he won't be down for long enough. If he did appear he'd bolt, and come back looking solemn. We shall have the laugh of him soon."

My wife coughed in a peculiar way.

"What does that mean?" I asked. "I say, Honor, you're not quite so warm to Jack as you used to be before he proposed for Prue."

"Indeed, I try to be, dear," said my wife.

"Oughtn't to want trying, pet. Jack's a dear, good fellow, and you'll own it when you know him better. I say, what a soaking he had this afternoon—drenched. He will go through everything, and he waded one ditch full of snow-water twice."

"It is very foolish, dear," said my wife, stitching away. "You men never seem to think of the risk of colds."

"Of course not," I replied, as I went to the window and looked out through the lattice casement at the wintry scene, with the snow whirling through the closing-in night. "B-r-r-r!" I growled, as I came back to the fire. "There'll be no shooting to-morrow. Billiards all day, I expect. I say, dear, of course there's not the slightest likelihood of Prue coming back by this afternoon's train?"

"Not the slightest," said my wife, quickly.

"Glad of it," I said. "Be a horrible ride from the station through the snow and darkness. When is she coming?"

"The day after to-morrow, dear."

"Well, it's time she was back," I grunted. "Here, put that work away! I want to talk to you, and you're only hurting your dear old eyes."

I snatched at the embroidery as I spoke, and my wife looked up uncomplainingly.

"What is it, dear?" she said, taking my hand.

I coughed now and hesitated, but her eyes seemed to make me speak.

"Well, I wanted to say a few words about Prue and Jack. Wasn't it rather bad form for her to shoot off to London as soon as she knew Jack was coming down?"

"No, dear," said my wife, slowly; "and it was not her doing."

"What!" I cried.

"I sent her up, dear, to mamma for a week."

"You did! What for?" I cried, in surprise.

"To do some shopping, for one thing."

"And what was the other?"

"To be out of the way at first when Jack came."

"The deuce you did!" I cried, in astonishment. "Why?"

"Because I did not want your cousin to find everything too smooth for him."

"Well, of all——" I began.

"I am not quite convinced yet of Jack's sincerity, dear," said my wife, gravely, as she held my hand up to her cheek.

"My dear old girl!" I cried. "Shame!"

"Tony, dear," she went on, as if she had not heard my words, "marriage is a very serious thing."

"Of course, and the dearest and best thing in the world when a pair are well matched," I cried, and I interpolated a little "business," as theatrical people call it.

"Don't, dear," she said, again.

"Then don't you set bad examples by rubbing my hand on your cheek. But I say, darling, to be serious, Jack is the best fellow in the world, and he loves Prue down to the ground."

"He thinks he does, dear," said my wife, quietly; "but he is very young and impulsive, and it would break my heart if he proved insincere to dear Prue."

"I'd shoot the beggar if he did," I cried, fiercely; "of course by accident, when aiming at a pheasant. Then you sent her away?"

"Yes, dear, and——Hush! here he is."

For the drawing-room door opened, the portière was wafted inward, and the flames and sparks roared up the wide old chimney till the door was closed again, and my second cousin Jack, lieutenant of fusiliers, came in, looking as frank and handsome a young Englishman as could be met in a day's march.

"I say, you two do look jolly in here," he said, as he strode up to the fire.

"Yes; what a storm!" I cried. "All right and dry again?"

"Oh, quite; but I say, Mrs. Grange, wasn't it lucky we had our shoot to-day?"

"Very," said my wife, smiling.

"I say, though, you don't think it likely your—your sister will come down to-night?"

"Not at all," said my wife, as I, full of the late remarks, looked keenly at our visitor.

"I am glad," he cried. "No, no, I mean I am sorry," he added, hastily. "It isn't a night fit for a dog to be out. What are you two laughing at?"

"You," I said. "You don't know your own mind."

"Oh, don't I?" he cried. "I meant to say, I wish she were here, but I shouldn't like her to be travelling down in a storm like this."

At that moment there was the sound of wheels muffled in the snow of the carriage drive, and a faint "Ck, ck, ck!" uttered by a driver.

"By George, here she is!" cried my cousin, springing from the chair into which he had sunk.

"Nonsense!" I cried. "Only something for the house."

As I spoke the deep-toned clang of the door-bell was heard, followed in due course by the roar of the wind through the open hall door, and then by steps going and coming in the hall, and at intervals a couple of bumps.

I sought my wife's eyes, and hers were fixed inquiringly upon mine, while Jack, who was all excitement, looked from one to the other again and again.

"I say," he said, at last, "it must be Prue!"

"Stuff!" I cried, testily. "If it had been Prue she'd either have been in here by now or we should have been in the hall to meet her."

"Yes, of course," he cried; "but why aren't you?"

"Because," I said, "it is something for the servants or the house, or the book-box from the library, though why the deuce they have come up to the front door I——here, what the dickens are you about?"

My words were too late to stop my cousin, for he was in the act of flinging open the door and rushing out, and before I could reach the hall myself I encountered him hurrying back, ready to thrust me before him into the drawing-room.

"It isn't!" he said, in a sharp whisper. "But, by George! such a pretty girl!"

Before more could be said the door was re-opened by Simmons, our butler, just as the dull, muffled sound of wheels was again heard passing the window.

"Who has come, Simmons?" said my wife.

"The noo lady's-maid, ma'am," replied the butler, austerely.

"Halloa!" I cried. "I didn't know of this. Have you discharged Robinson?"

"New lady's-maid, Simmons?" said my wife. "Absurd! Oh, it is some mistake."

"That's what I told her, ma'am, but she said it was quite right: that she was engaged by a young lady at her ladyship's in Eaton Street the day before yesterday."

"By my sister?" said my wife, wonderingly.

"Yes'm. She said it was a handsome young lady with a very fresh colour."

"Quite right," said Jack, in a half whisper to me.

"And that she was wanted directly, ma'am, and the young lady gave her the money for her fare, and a card—one of our cards, ma'am—with the time on it the train left King's Cross, and the station she was to get out at, and that she was to take the station fly and come on six miles. She's brought her boxes, ma'am—two—heavy ones."

"Then it isn't a mistake," I said. "There, take the poor thing to the housekeeper's room, and tell them to give her some hot tea. She must be perished."

"Yes, sir," said the butler; and as soon as the door was closed I turned to my wife.

"Here, what game's this?" I cried. "What does Prue want with a maid?"

"I don't know, dear," replied my wife. "I'm as much puzzled as you are. It is so strange. She never said a word to me."

"You've offended her," I said, meaningly. "You know why. She's going away."

"That's it," said Jack, eagerly. "I did write very plainly to her about something. I told her that at any time I might be ordered abroad, and begged her that something might take place at once."

"And what did my sister say in her reply?" said my wife, stiffly.

"Oh, she wrote just what a girl would say," cried Jack, laughing merrily—"that we must wait."

"Of course," said my wife, gravely. "My sister was not named Prudence for nothing, Mr. Merton."

"Oh, come, none of that," he cried. "It's Jack, brother Jack, Mrs. Grange. I was a bit popped, as the Lincolnshire people call it, to find her away when I came. I didn't like it, I can tell you. It seemed like huffing a fellow; but it's all right. I see through it now. She's been up to talk it over with the old girl."

My wife is wonderfully like her sister, and they both have a beautiful high colour. In fact, I often chaff them both about it, and say what pretty girls they'd be if they were always kept in a cool place; but I never saw my wife's cheeks so scarlet as they were that evening in the firelight when she drew herself up and said, haughtily:—

"My sister did not go up to town to consult mamma, Mr. Merton, and if she had gone for such a purpose, Lady Lancelot—the old girl!"—this was with withering contempt—"would not have given her consent to any such premature proceedings."

"I beg pardon," said Jack, hurriedly, in answer to several nods and shakes of the head from me. "No disrespect meant to

"SHE DREW HERSELF UP."

Lady Lancelot. Nothing of the kind. Always feel chivalrous—as a soldier should, don't-cherknow, towards the—er—er—er mamma of the girl I'm engaged to, and of her sister. Really beg pardon, Mrs. Grange. Here, Tony, do help a fellow. You know: assure your wife I didn't mean any harm."

"Well," I said, gruffly; "it's not the way to speak of Lady Lancelot, Jack."

"It wasn't, old man," he cried, warmly. "It wasn't, indeed. It was blackguardly. Slipped out, don'tcherknow, Mrs. Grange—Honoria—sister—Prue's sister—I say, do you want a fellow to go down upon his knees?"

"No," said my wife, coldly. "Say no more about it, but pray dismiss that foolish idea from your brain."

"But she went up to town directly after she must have had my letter saying I was coming down to stay. Why did she do that?" cried Jack, who was recovering his balance.

"Because I sent her," said my wife, coldly.

"Oh!" said Jack, who was silenced for the moment. But he recovered himself and struck out again directly. "Look here," he cried, in a tone of triumph; "then why did she engage such a pretty maid all in a hurry?"

"I do not know," said my wife, crossing to the bell and pulling it sharply—a way she has when she feels nettled; "but let me tell you this, Mr. Merton: When your cousin was engaged to me he had no eyes for the prettiness of any maid-servant."

"What!" cried Jack, bursting into a fit of uncontrollable merriment. "Oh, come!—I say!—I do like that!—Old Tony not have an eye for a pretty girl because he was engaged!—Why, he was——"

"Will you hold your tongue, you confounded idiot!" I roared, for he paid not the slightest heed to my fierce grins and frowns.

"Halloa!" he cried. "What, have I done it again? Here, I suppose I'd better go to my room. Only send me up a cut of something, for I'm half starved."

"You'd better!" I cried, in a rage. "Sit down, and hold your tongue."

For at that moment Simmons answered the bell.

"Beg pardon, ma'am. I was coming up."

"Why?" I asked, for the man was wide-eyed and trembling as if from excitement.

"The new young person's coming, sir, and Miss Robinson."

"What about Miss Robinson?" I cried.

"Fits, sir. Gone into hysterics. We couldn't do anything with her at first, and I was going to ask you if Edward hadn't better ride over to Lindthorpe for the doctor?"

"Tut, tut, tut!" exclaimed my wife. "When was she taken bad?"

"As soon as she heard there was to be a noo maid, ma'am."

"Oh, dear me!" cried my wife. "It's all a mistake, Simmons."

"So I kep' on telling her, ma'am; but she would shriek and throw herself about and say it was a shame, and that she'd go out and die in the snow. I haven't sweat—perspired so, sir," said the man, turning to me, "cold as it is, for a month."

"I'll come to her, Simmons," said my wife.

"I don't think you need now, ma'am. I got the best pale bottle out, and Mrs. Denham and cook nearly delooged her with it, and she's calmed down now."

"Then go and tell her, Simmons, that I say it is all a mistake, and that I am not going to dismiss her. Then, as soon as this strange person has finished her tea, bring her up here."

"Yes, ma'am."

"One moment, Simmons. The station fly has not gone back, of course?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am. Parlow, the driver, went off in a hurry. He'd got to take Sir Rennery Rollins's people to a dinner at Benby. Their brougham horse has got a cold."

"That will do, Simmons," said my wife.

"Beg pardon, ma'am; is cook to keep back the dinner?"

"No," I said, sharply. "Mr. Merton's starving."

"Yes," said my wife, sweetly. "You will not mind waiting another quarter of an hour—Jack?"

Her words brought my cousin to his feet, his face lighting up with satisfaction.

"Mind? Not I!" he cried, eagerly. "Only cut a little deeper, Tony, when you carve," he added, turning to me.

II.

I LAUGHED, and as the butler left the room it was striking to see how we three all began to play at the game of making it up. Faces brightened, and we chattered away about every subject we could think of—the shooting that day—Jack's wading the 2ft. deep ditch—the prospects for the morrow, and so on, but not a word about Prue or the new arrival till the door-handle rattled.

Then Jack sprang up.

"You'd like me to go?" he said, with a glance at my wife.

"Certainly not, Jack," she replied, gravely. "Please stay."

He dropped back into his lounge and stole a glance sidewise at the decidedly good-looking, refined, well-dressed body who was ushered into the room by Simmons, and who curtsied with quiet dignity to all three of us with one swoop as the door closed upon the butler.

In that one glance I saw that she had removed all trace of her journey, and that the little white lace cap she wore and her hair had quite a Parisian look, so that I was not surprised when, meeting my wife's eyes, she gave a little affected start of surprise, and said, with a very French accent:—

"Ah, mamselle, then you have come first?"

"I—I beg your pardon?" said my wife, and Jack darted a knowing look at me.

"Mamselle told me *avant hier* that it would be some days before she came down into Lin-counne-sheere."

"It is a mistake," said my wife, quietly. "I never saw you before in my life."

"Mamselle!" said our visitor, in a tone of faint reproach, "when you tell me my *lettre* of raccommandacione from Miladi Rootlande are so sateesfactorre that you engage me at once, for it is an emairgencee?—— Ah-h-h! pardonne! No!" she cried, wrinkling her forehead with a piquante look of perplexity, as she raised her hands, palm outward, towards the dead gold brooch at her throat. "Eet is the same face, the same *distingué* air, and the same *teint de rose* in ze sheek. Pardonne, madame, you are ze seestairre?"

My wife bowed.

"Then my sister——"

"Mees Prudence Lanceleow," said our visitor, smiling faintly.

"Engaged you for her maid?"

"Yes, madame, and the Lady Lanceleow."

"Ah! you saw mamma?" said my wife, eagerly.

"Oh, *oui*, madame, and she ask me many question about my Lady Rootlande, and why I resign my dear good meestresse."

"Why did you?" asked my wife.

"Ah, madame, she goes to live *toujours*, always, on the Riviera, and I can never see La Belle France any more."

"Why?" I said, quickly, and then I repented speaking and interfering in my wife's task, for our visitor turned her face slowly towards me, making several wrinkles in a very white forehead, and drawing up the inner ends of her eyebrows till they were quite straight, while she took a dainty cambric handkerchief from her pocket and applied it slowly to each of her eyes.

"Cet is too *triste*, *m'sieu*," she said, in a low tone. "My fathaire—my brothaire! The teerrible days of the Commune! England is our countree now. I go back to beautiful France—nevaire."

"'CET IS TOO TRISTE, M'SIEU,' SHE SAID."

"I see; I see," I said, hastily, and left my wife, as Jack said afterwards, to handle her cue.

"Did Lady Lancelot," said my wife, "Lancelot; we pronounce the t's—not Lancelo."

"Ah, yais, madame: Launcelotte."

"Did my mother ask you any further questions?"

"Oh, many, many, many, madame. About the coiffure, the robes, the dressmaking."

"And was Lady Lancelot satisfied?"

"I think so, madame; but I remember she say to mamselle your seestairre a month on trial."

"Yes; mamma would say so," said my wife, thoughtfully.

"But mamselle your seestairre say that with such raccommandaciones it was not necessaire, as she was only in town for a day or two."

"Ha!" sighed Jack, but he tried to cover it with a cough.

"But I forget, madame, she write to Miladi Rootlande, Hotel de Beau Rivage, Cannes."

"Well, I will not detain you any longer," said my wife. "You must be tired after a very long, cold journey."

The new maid gave a curious little shudder, and raised her shoulders very prettily.

"Ze cold was *affreuse*, madame, and ze thirrd class coupé was vairree not comfortable when the hot wataire in ze foot-warm go quite out."

"It was a long, cold journey," said my wife. "You can go back to the housekeeper's room, and tell Mrs. Denham to see that you have a fire in your bed-chamber."

"Meeses Denham, madame—the good lady who have the bad fit?"

"No, no; that is Robinson, my maid. She was afraid that you had come to take her place."

"Ah-h-h! I see, madame. But it ees not so."

"Certainly not. That will do."

There was another curtsy spread round to all three, and our visitor glided out of the room.

"She looks a very capable person," said my wife, thoughtfully. "Then I suppose Prue will be down in a day or two; but we are sure to have a letter in the morning. Do you like her appearance, Tony?"

"Well, yes, but I always have a prejudice against those very precise-looking bodies. Not bad-looking, but a little old in the tooth. Eh, Jack?" I said, mischievously.

"Didn't look at 'em," he replied, gruffly. "Dessay they're false."

I looked at my wife, and she looked at me, and then, quite at one, we all laughed merrily, our mirth being put an end to by the coming of Simmons, with—

"The dinner is served, ma'am."

Then we adjourned to the dining-room, where the odour of soup and fish, and the brightness of fire, candles, plate and glass, made us all forget the coming of the new maid and the strange behaviour of sister-in-law Prue.

That night, when Jack and I were in the smoking-room having our final cigars, my wife came in to bid our prospective relative good-night, and announced that it was snowing heavily.

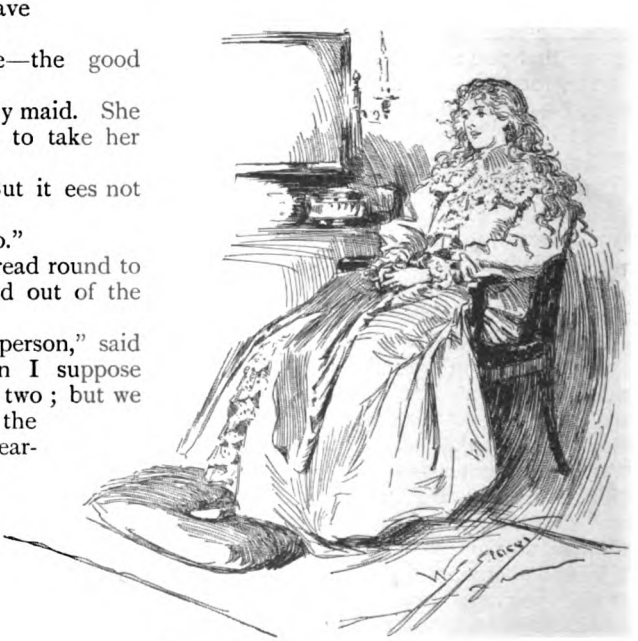
"No shooting to-morrow, Jack," she said, merrily.

"Never mind," he replied, with his face lighting up. "I'll have a good quiet day indoors."

"Tony, old man," he cried, as soon as we were alone, "I am glad that little breeze has blown over."

"So am I. There, let it drop."

He did let it drop, and we did not say "good-night" till another cigar had been lit and finished. Then I hurried up to our



"SHE HAD NOT LEFT HER DRESSING-ROOM."

room, fully expecting to find my wife fast asleep; but ladies' hair does take so long even on wintry nights, and she had not left her dressing-room.

"What have you done with the new maid?" I asked, after a time.

"Put her in the visitors' servants' room. Poor Robinson! She was half broken-hearted, and I've had to go and see her and comfort the silly girl."

"But I say, Honor, is Jack right about Prue?"

"No," said my wife, emphatically.

"Then what does it mean about the new maid?"

"I suppose she has taken it into her head to have one of her own. I don't understand it yet, but let it wait till she comes back."

"Strikes me you've put her monkey up by interfering between her and Jack."

"No," said my wife, after a few moments' thought. "Prue felt with me that Jack ought to learn that he was not to treat their engagement so lightly. He has been acting over the most serious matter in their lives like a thoughtless boy. They cannot marry yet for years."

"*Certainly*——"

Now, I have a vivid recollection of saying that word, and I meant to add *not;* but I don't think I did, for all is blank in my mind till the regular hot-water knock came at our door, the necessary being brought by my wife's maid.

It was Simmons who brought the other hot water, an hour later, over our meal.

III.

"WHAT a glorious morning!" was the favourite remark when we three gathered at the breakfast table, for the storm of the night was over, the sun shining brilliantly in a deep blue sky, and the whole world, as far as we could see, dazzling white with the heavy snowfall.

"Slept well, Jack?" I said.

"Never better. Wind seemed to sing lullaby."

"Yes, Simmons?" I said, as that worthy's lips moved preliminary to a speech as he handed the cutlets.

"I beg pardon, sir, but did either of you gentlemen open the front door after I had gone to bed?"

"Swear I didn't," said Jack, with his mouth full of hot bread-cake.

"No, certainly not," I replied. "Why, did you think you heard it?"

"No, sir; but all the fastenings were undone, and the bar standing in the corner."

"Halloa!" cried Jack; "burglars. What about the plate-chest, Simmons?"

"That's quite safe, sir, in the iron closet," said the butler, shaking his head. "It would be a bad night's work for any burglar, sir, who came near my pantry."

"Yes, you'd better remember that while you're stopping here, old man, and not go rousing him up in the night. Ring your bedroom bell if you want B. and S., or anything of that kind. Simmons has a brace of pistols over his bed's head—a fine old pair of flint-locks that were at Waterloo."

"I'll remember," said Jack, devoting himself attentively to the cutlets.

"You must have forgotten to fasten the hall door, Simmons," I said, rather sternly.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the butler, severely, and with a movement of the head which made his stiff white neckcloth crackle. "I couldn't have gone to sleep if I had."

"Well, no one here meddled with it," I said. "There's nothing wrong about the house, I hope?"

"No, sir, nothing. I have examined all the lower windows."

"Ah, but what about the upper?"

"The gardeners have been round, sir, and there's not a sign outside, and the ladders are all in their shelter on the barn wall."

"What about footmarks?"

"The ground's one thick sheet of snow, sir. There wasn't a footprint."

"False alarm, Simmons," I said. "One of the maids must have unfastened the door before you were up."

"But I beg——"

"Well, never mind till after breakfast," I said. "Where's the letter-bag?"

"Not come in yet, sir. I hear that the mail's been stopped by the snow in a cutting, and the road between here and the station's quite blocked."

"Then the fall has been very heavy?"

"Tremenjus, sir."

No more was said, the butler leaving the room.

"We must have had a storm, then," said Jack, glancing out at the dazzling white landscape.

"Yes; no shooting to-day, Jack," said my wife.

"Oh, I don't know," he said. "I vote we go after the hares, Tony. We can see them a mile away, and track them by the footprints."

"Rather murderous, eh?" I ventured to observe.

"Oh, no; we won't shoot many. It will be glorious out in the snow."

"Very well," I said. "How soon shall we start?"

"Soon as you like, old man. I'll get my leggings on and go round the house to see how deep the snow is. Ah! they're shovelling away on the drive."

"Yes," I said, as we all adjourned to the big bay window. "My word, it is deep!"

Just then Simmons re-entered.

"Mrs. Denham would like to speak to you, ma'am, when you have done breakfast."

"We've quite finished, Simmons," replied my wife. "Is it about the new maid?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Send her in."

"Here, I say," I cried, as the butler left the room; "I hope that woman's not knocked up with her journey and wants a doctor."

Our prim old housekeeper entered the room directly, looking very much troubled, and after her salutes to all, began with:—

"I'm very sorry to trouble you, ma'am, but the new French maid——"

"I knew it, Jack," I cried. "What do you say to me for a prophet?"

"You knew it, Master Anthony?" cried the old lady, eagerly, addressing me after her familiar fashion, begun in my late father's days.

"Yes. What is it—feverish cold from exposure? Well, you can doctor her for that: Dover's powder, mustard plaster, and all the rest of it."

"But she's gone, sir!" said the old lady, excitedly.

"Gone!" we all cried, in a breath.

"Yes, ma'am. Yes, Master Anthony. Her door was locked, and we couldn't make her hear, and I consulted with Mr. Simmons, and we decided at last to break the lock."

"And you did?" I cried, excitedly.

"Yes, sir, and found the bed had not been slept in, but the fire had been kept up so that the scuttle was empty; and some time in the night she must have slipped away."

"What, through that storm?"

"Yes, sir. Mr. Simmons found the hall-door unfastened. She must have come down and let herself out."

"Strange," I said. "But what about her boxes?"

"They're both in the room, sir, just as John left them after he and the boy had carried them up and uncorded one and unstrapped the other for her."

"Then she has taken fright," I said, decidedly. "Didn't like the look of us; and the next thing will be an application for her boxes."

"OH, TONY, ALL MY DIAMONDS AND PEARLS—ALL MY BEST WEDDING PRESENTS!"

"But what about Prue when she comes down?" cried Jack. "She'll be horribly disappointed. I say," he continued, turning to my wife, "you didn't tell the woman that she couldn't stay, or anything of that sort?"

"No, no; I did not see her again, Jack," said my wife.

"Here, stop a minute," I cried. "Is all right upstairs?"

"Oh, Tony, dear; don't be so cruelly suspicious," cried my wife. "It is as you say: The poor, excitable Frenchwoman has taken fright. Everything is quite correct upstairs, Denham?"

"Yes, ma'am, as far as I could make out," replied the old housekeeper.

"Did you look round my dressing-room?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am."

"And my jewel-case was on the escritoire?"

The old woman's jaw dropped, and with a faint cry my wife darted towards the door, all following, and reaching the hall in time to see her disappear at the top of the great flight of broad oak stairs.

They were very low, broad stairs, and I went up them four at a time, reaching the dressing-room door just in time to hear my wife shriek loudly, and to meet her as she rushed out.

"Oh, Tony, all my diamonds and pearls—all my best wedding presents!"

"D—n!" I shouted.

"Sold!" cried Jack, his word sounding like an echo from the landing.

I ask pardon for using the first of these words, but I place them here just to show how emphatic Englishmen can be at a critical time, and also how with one word they can express as much as a Frenchman would require at least a hundred to effect.

"Yes," cried my wife, excitedly; "I see it all now."

"Oh, yes, my dear; we can see it all now," I said, bitterly. "It's perfectly plain, and, as Jack says, we've been sold."

"Well, look here," cried Jack; "now's the time to show your administrative powers, Tony; and I'll do the executive."

"What do you mean?" I said, savagely.

"Order out your light cavalry to summon the police, and put a stopper on anyone going off by rail from any station within a radius of twenty miles round."

"Hurrah! Good!" I cried, as my brain began to work.

"Then wire off to Prue. No, I'll do that, and answer paid."

"Yes, do, Jack," I cried. "And, look here, the line's blocked. She—the enemy—can't have got away. Go and write your wire. I'll have the horses saddled and the men off for the police, while you and I will search the country round."

"Yes, dear; do, do, do—oh, do!" cried my wife. "I would not lose those presents for ten times their value. Oh, to think I could have let myself be deceived like that!"

We all set to work, and in a very short time the men were struggling through the snow-drifts on their way to town and station, while with the help of the three gardeners and the boy we went wading about the grounds and the road and lanes beyond, to find out in a very short time that we could do nothing for the snow, and, of course, there was not a track to be seen.

"Look here," I said, as we encountered my head gardener after a long round, "when did it begin to snow hard?"

"Four o'clock, sir. Then it came all at once."

"How do you know?"

"I was in a bit of a fidget, sir, about my stove plants and my fires, for I felt that a big change was coming, and I couldn't sleep. I was out twice to put on more coke, and it was four by my clock in the bothy when I came back the second time, with the snow coming down blinding, sir."

"Earlier in the night there was not so much snow?"

"No, sir; it melted away as it fell."

"Then she must have got away before the storm came on."

"I'm afraid so," replied Jack. "Here, hadn't we better get back to the Hall to see if there's any news?"

I nodded, and we trudged back through the snow, to find that the letter-bag and a telegram had been brought in, the mail-cart having arrived from a town twenty miles away.

"I opened your telegram, Jack," said my wife, apologetically, as she handed it to him.

"That's right. What does she say? Oh, here it is: 'All stuff and nonsense. I have engaged no maid. Coming down by the next train'!"

"Of course she hadn't," cried my wife, triumphantly, and Jack crumpled up the pink paper and stood rubbing his ear with a corner, looking vexed and upset.

"Oh, dear, oh, dear! My diamonds—my pearls!" sobbed my wife.

"Don't, don't, don't!" I cried, querulously. "I'll buy you some more."

"But you can't buy those again, Tony. Oh! that wicked, deceitful woman!"

"Be quiet," I said; "here's the inspector's cart, and the majesty of the law."

A few minutes later the official was being put in possession of all we knew, and he nodded his head and looked wonderfully wise.

"There's no doubt about it, sir," he said,

at last. "You've been regularly had, and our only chance is to catch my lady somewhere on the rail. She's gone north, and as soon as I get back to the station I'll have the wires at work. But I should just like to see her boxes."

"This way," I said, and we all went up to the neat bedroom reserved for the servants of our visitors, on one side of which stood a big, oak-painted, iron travelling box and one of the regular, half-round-topped, shiny, black canvas trunks so much affected by womankind.

"Quite noo uns," said the inspector. "Can you oblige me with a screwdriver and hammer, Mr. Simmons?"

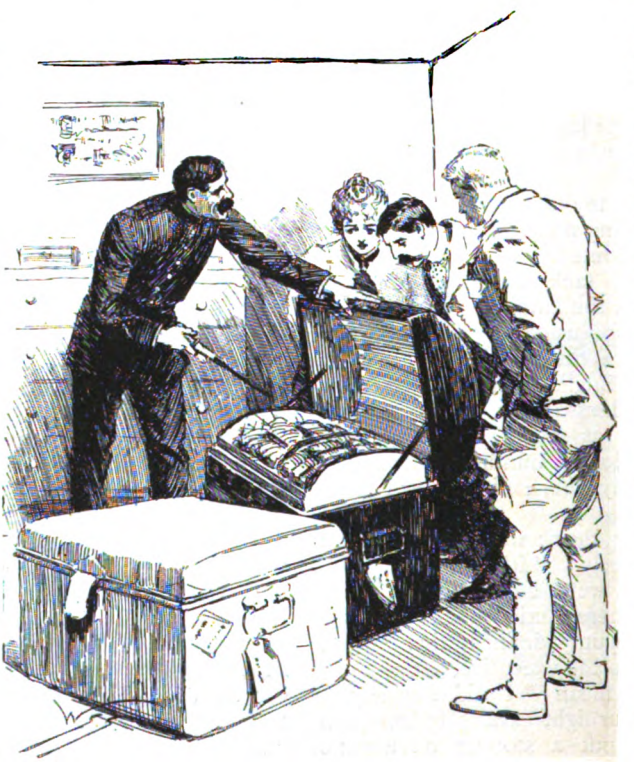
The butler hurried off to fetch the tools, and my wife interposed.

"Would it be right to break open a servant's boxes?" she said.

"Under special circumstances, madam," said the inspector, gravely; "and these are very special."

"Of course," I said; and as soon as Simmons returned the inspector dexterously inserted the edge of the big screwdriver.

"Why, you seem to know how to do it," said Jack.



"HE WAS QUITE RIGHT; AND ALL NEW—BOXES, BRICKS, AND HAY."

"Yes, sir; took lessons from the gentlemen of the jemmy," replied the inspector; and *crick! crack!* up flew the lid.

"Thought so," he said. "Bricks packed tightly in hay. Same in the other, I'll be bound."

He was quite right; and all new—boxes, bricks, and hay.

"My lady expected to make a good haul, sir," said the inspector, "so didn't spare expense. At what sum would you value the jewels?"

"Five thousand pounds, at least," I said. "Old family diamonds and presents."

"Then I'll be off, sir, at once," said the inspector, "and I'll send you news the moment there is anything to say."

We could do no more than arrange for the brougham to fetch Prue that evening, for if the line was cleared she would be at the station at seven; and the day wore on, full of expectation, but with no news.

When the time came my wife decided to go in the brougham herself to fetch her sister, making Jack look rather glum; but he said nothing, only smoked a great deal, and stood for the last half-hour outside the hall door, while he waited for the return of the brougham.

This came in due time, Prue looking exceedingly bright and attractive, and in true sisterly fashion doing all she could to comfort my wife over her loss.

Then in spite of the trouble as the night wore on I saw enough to prove to me, as I said later on to my wife, that it was no matter what she or I said or did, matters between the young people would have to take their course. For whatever his failings might be, Jack was passionately in love with Prue, and the young lady herself looked upon him as a perfect hero and all that was desirable in a man.

At breakfast next morning Honor and I were late, and my wife looked a trifle serious and annoyed to find that "the young people" had been down for an hour and a half, talking by the fire.

"Yes," said Prue, quietly; "it had only just been lit when I came down."

"I never looked upon you as an early riser, Prue," said my wife, rather coldly.

"You were down pretty soon too, Jack," I said, drawing a bow at a venture.

"Oh, yes; I was first," said our visitor, innocently. "We planned it last night."

"Planned what?" said my wife, sharply.

"To hold a meeting about your loss," said Jack; "and we agreed to this, that as Prue's got £5,000 of her own when she marries, she shall hand it over to you to replace your jewels."

"Oh!" cried my wife, with the tears rising to her eyes.

"It's all right, Mrs. Grange; we've settled it all. We don't want the money, do we, Prue?"

"No, Jack, dear," she said, going behind him to lay her hands on his shoulders—both of which little pink bunches of fingers he prisoned and then kissed. "We only want one another."

"Oh, spoons!" I cried, savagely. "Sweet children! Of course, you don't want any money, only bread, and honey, and moonshine. Bah!"

"Be quiet, Tony," said my wife, with the tears gathering thickly; and the next minute she made both their faces wet by bending down and kissing them, her lids brimming over in the act.

"Not a penny of it, Prue, dear," she said. "But it's very nice and manly of you, Jack, dear, and I shall never forget it. There, I won't fret about a few bits of coloured stone and gold and silver, and I won't oppose anything again if you'll both promise to be a good boy and girl and wait for a year."

"A year!" cried Jack, in a tone of dismay.

"Pst! Simmons!" I whispered, and then aloud, "What have you got?"

"Kidneys, sir."

"Devilled?"

"Yes, sir; and fried soles."

"Then come along, good folks; it's nearly ten."

"Ha, yes," cried Jack, taking his chair, with the love-light in his eyes giving place to a fierce, ravening look indicative of hunger.

But he looked very genial half an hour later when he turned to me.

"I say, Tony, old man," he cried, "what are we going to do to-day?"

"I'm going to ride over to the station and try to get news of that wretched woman."

"No, Tony," said my wife, decisively; "nothing of the kind. The matter is in the hands of the police, and if my jewels are found I shall be very glad; but if they prove to be lost they are lost, and I shall not fret about them."

"Oh!" I said. "So much for what I'm going to do. I'll try again about you, Jack. You're going to lie down like a lap-dog at Prue's feet, and blink, and beam, and worship, and——"

"That I'm not," he shouted. "Prue doesn't want me to be such a fool in public."

"But in private?"

"You mind your own business," growled Jack. "You've got a wife. Look here—the hares are scuffling about all over the snow; I must go and have a turn at them to-day. Never mind the robbery; come on."

"Yes, Tony, dear; don't let that trouble put a stop to your going out."

"Oh, very well," I said, and we started, with the understanding that we were to be back to a late luncheon at two o'clock.

We came back earlier. For after a tramp over the frozen snow we found ourselves about a mile from home, with the keeper and a couple of retrievers panting at our side. We were making for a hazel copse dotted with good-sized oak trees, the keeper having given it as his opinion that we should put up a pheasant or two where the snow lay less thick, and that the dogs would flush them at the lower end.

But we shot no pheasant, for about halfway through the copse one of the dogs gave tongue and rushed off, to begin scratching eagerly and snuffling in a hollow half-filled with snow.

"Halloa!" cried Jack, as we came up. "What's he got here?"

"Rabbit," I said, contemptuously; "come away, you brute.—Here, both of you," I cried, excitedly; "look sharp. Good heavens, Jack! Some poor creature has been overtaken in the storm."

"Dead?" gasped Jack, as he leaned over the hollow from which, after casting aside our guns, we had scraped away the snow.

"Yes. She must have been here since the night before last. Why, Jack, it is that woman!"

The figure lay curled up in a crouching attitude, wrapped in a large waterproof, and with a woollen check scarf drawn over her head and face.

I thrust my hand beneath the scarf to try and find whether there was a trace of life, and sure enough there was a little warmth, and one of the arms upon which I drew to get at the throat yielded.

"Here, Jack," I cried, excitedly, "never mind the guns. Where's your flask?"

This was produced, and when a few drops were poured between the blue lips we saw

"THE FIGURE LAY CURLED UP."

them trickle in through the clenched teeth and disappear, to be followed by a spasmodic contraction of the throat.

"She's alive yet," I said. "Now then, come along; let's get her back to the Hall. What have you got there, Thomson?"

"Sort of box, sir, with a strap round it," said the gamekeeper, brushing off the snow from something against which he had kicked.

"Why, Tony, old man, it's the jewel-case," cried Jack, excitedly. "Talk about bagging game: we've done it this time!"

He was quite right, and though we left our guns behind, with the dogs to watch, we contrived to carry my wife's jewel-case as well as our prisoner back to the Hall—the latter part of the journey being lightened by means of help from the gardeners, who were fetched, and brought a hand-barrow.

Everything possible was done when we arrived at the house, and by the time the doctor reached us from the town our visitor was beginning to display signs of life.

Let it suffice to say that after a long fit of rheumatic fever, during which the woman was well nursed, she was transferred to the infirmary in the county gaol, and from thence went before the magistrates and afterwards for trial—a trial which resulted in a couple of years' imprisonment.

There was no mystery in the case after all, for Prue identified the woman at once as an out-of-place French servant who had been in the habit of visiting one of her mother's maids in Eaton Street, and from what she had picked up there the woman managed to plan the theft which so nearly succeeded.

"It was as clever as it was daring, sergeant," I said to the detective who had had charge of the case.

"Yes, sir," he said, "pretty tidy; but you see it was a woman, and you never know where to have them. The artfulness some of 'em's got in their heads, and the face with which they carry it out, is something that caps me. We have to keep our eyes open to be on a level with the men nowadays, for the more folks of their sort are educated the cunninger they grow. I always want to know what they'll be up to next. But when it comes to a woman—there, I'm done!"

A New-World Sport.

By H. A. Nicholls.

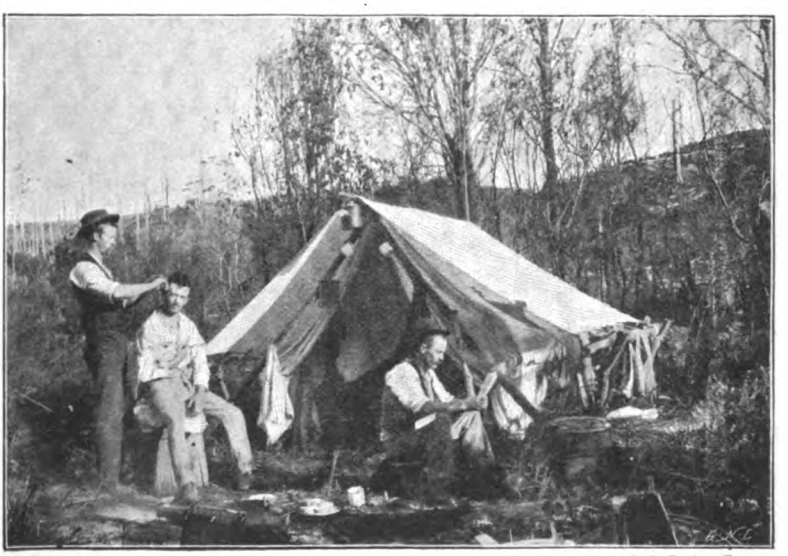
CERTAINLY no race has yet trodden this somewhat aged earth the units of which have developed a greater capacity for enduring hardships when there is even a prospect of success in the dim future than Britishers; and, again, no other race has ever developed such a power to make the best of life, and to obtain pleasure and sport where such appeared impossible of attainment, than the same grand old race. These characteristics, coupled with bulldog tenacity of purpose and determination, have made many parts of Tasmania and Gippsland, Victoria, a perfect garden of luxuriance, and have brought the sport of axemanship into existence and popularity until it now stands as the national sport of all the timbered parts of the Colonies.

To understand the sport it will be necessary first to describe the conditions under which the competitors live. The majority are either settlers cutting out homes for themselves, or men earning their living by felling timber for saw-mills, by splitting timber into post-rails or paling, or by felling the scrub by contract for the more wealthy class of selectors who are making clearings in the forests, or as it is locally called "the bush." This "bush" is a dense growth of vegetation, covering some of the richest tracts of chocolate soil in the world. The immense size of the trees and the luxuriance of the under-growth loudly proclaim by the voice of Nature this fact; and to place a "new chum" in the midst of one of these gigantic, lonely forests and ask him whether it was possible to have waving crops of growing corn around where he stood in but a few years' time, he would say "Impossible," and yet such transformations are year by year in progress.

Many of the settlers had but little education, owing to their distance from schools, hence literary pursuits were denied them. Their best-loved weapon was the axe, and the pioneer of pioneers was as much beloved as the Highland soldier loves his bayonet. Their talk was mainly of their axes and saws, and who excelled in their use; therefore, a spirit of rivalry arose which led to private matches to see who could cut a given size log in the quickest time.

From this desire to excel in their work arose the Axemen's Association, which organized these trials of skill, and by the public trials before thousands of people annually a practical technical education of the highest order has been conferred upon the settlers. They have throughout the length and breadth of Australasia been taught how to do more work with less exertion, and how to do it better, thus shortening the period required to clear land or prepare timber for market; whilst the competitions have evoked an interest in their lives wholly beneficial, and have given one of the most loyal, honest, and true sections of Her Majesty's servants to prove before the world that, far from being inferior, the woodsmen are one of the hardiest, most fearless classes of men in the world, whose very success is undying testimony of many years of hard toil and unremitting effort.

During their life in the bush these men



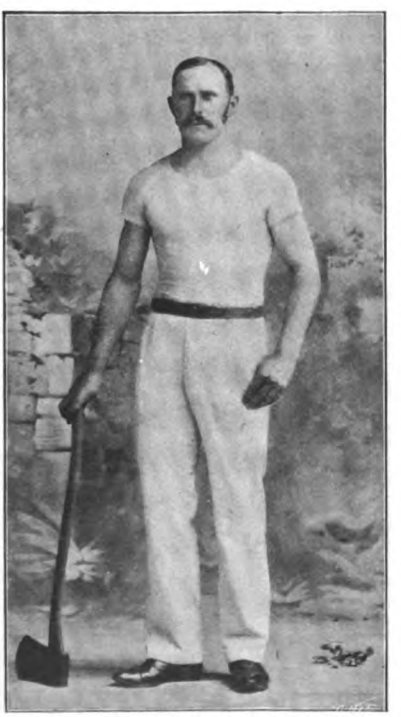
From a Photo. by] AN AXEMAN'S CAMP IN THE BUSH. [*G. P. Taylor, Tas.*

meet with hundreds of narrow escapes, until sometimes these are so marvellous that men not acquainted with their lives would not believe one man could have so many escapes and yet live. But this is only by the way, and it is of the Axemen's Association and the sport of chopping I am writing.

In June, 1891, a meeting was held in Latrobe, Tasmania, when, on plans submitted by the present writer, those attending (all settlers) resolved to form an association "for the purpose of publicly demonstrating the skill to which the settlers in the Colonies have attained with axe, saw, splitting-knife, and other tools, and to promote, as far as possible, the improvement in such skill by holding competitive exhibitions of skill," etc. As the promoter of the meeting, and bearing in mind all I knew of the hard lives of the settlers, I set to work with a will, and my first appeal was to the Governor of Tasmania, Sir R. C. Hamilton (since dead). His Excellency responded, accepting the position of patron, sending a cheque and, what was better still, wishing the new association success.

A chopping carnival was held that year, and was a huge success; another the following year, though held in a small township, was attended by one of the greatest crowds ever drawn together in the Colony, and among the guests were His Excellency Sir R. C. Hamilton (Governor of Tasmania), Lady Hamilton, His Excellency Lord Hopetoun (Governor of Victoria), Lady Hopetoun, and other distinguished guests.

W. H. CHELLIS, WORLD'S CHAMPION AXE-CUTTER OF STANDING BLOCKS.
From a Photo. by G. P. Taylor, Ulverston, Tasmania.



J. M. MACKINOLTY, CHAMPION AXEMAN OF LYING BLOCKS.
From a Photo. by Stewart & Co., Melbourne.

Since that date carnivals have been annually held, and each year large prizes have been given away, the various championships being fought out with a singleness of purpose and intensity of zeal on the part of the contestants, and amid excitement on the part of onlookers, that astonish many who attend, and stamp the sport as the national one of the Colony.

The ninth of these axemen's carnivals was held in Ulverston, Tasmania, early in December, 1899, and was as successful as its predecessors, notwithstanding that rain considerably marred the pleasure of the outing.

The championship of the world in standing block chopping—*i.e.*, logs placed just as though the tree were still growing — was won by W. H. Chellis, of Delorame, Tasmania, with Abe Bryan, of Victoria, second; and Thos. Pettitt, of Sprint, Tasmania, third. There were about a dozen contestants, and the blocks were of stringybark, freshly cut, and all trimmed to exactly 6ft. 4in. girth.

At the word "Go!" all the razor-like axes were sunk deep in the quivering blocks, and then the shouts of the onlookers commenced, each encouraging his favourite on; and as the blows fell thick and fast, and huge chips dropped like hail round each man's block, the crowd grew almost frantic. In less than two minutes most of the axemen had put in their front kerfs and turned to cut the back in; then the roars of the onlookers increased, if possible; the policemen gathering round the inclosing fences to prevent an

excited rush. As the men nearly completed their task it was seen that any one of four or five might win; but when the head of Chellis's block trembled and then fell, there arose a shout that would almost waken the dead, for was not a Tasmanian again champion of the world? though the Victorian, Bryan, was only defeated by a blow, and several others were close up. The winner was carried off shoulder high by admirers, and as he left the grounds cheer after cheer rose. Bryan also came in for hearty cheering for his plucky cutting.

THOMAS PETTITT, CHAMPION SAWYER OF THE WORLD.
From a Photo. by G. P. Taylor, Ulverston, Tas.

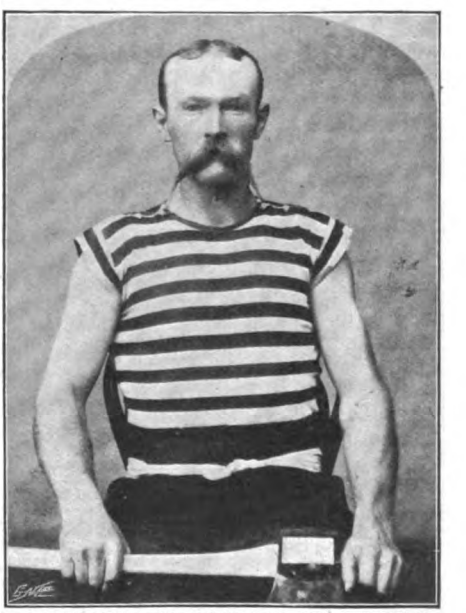
The winner is a magnificent specimen of stalwart manhood, weighing 15st. 3lb. in training, and standing 6ft. 4in. high. The other competitors were to a man well developed, and the measurement of their arms and legs would astonish anyone. The average weight was 13st.

R. CHATWIN, EX-CHAMPION SAWYER, WHO WON THE CHAMPIONSHIP FOUR TIMES.
From a Photo. by G. P. Taylor, Ulverston, Tas.

Should the readers of this think that our Tasmanian is not the champion of the world, then let them send along a Canadian, an American, or a European woodchopper, and the Tasmanian will be found ready and willing to contest the honour with him for almost any stake, and, in addition, the association will be glad to allow one or more who come thus a substantial sum for expenses.

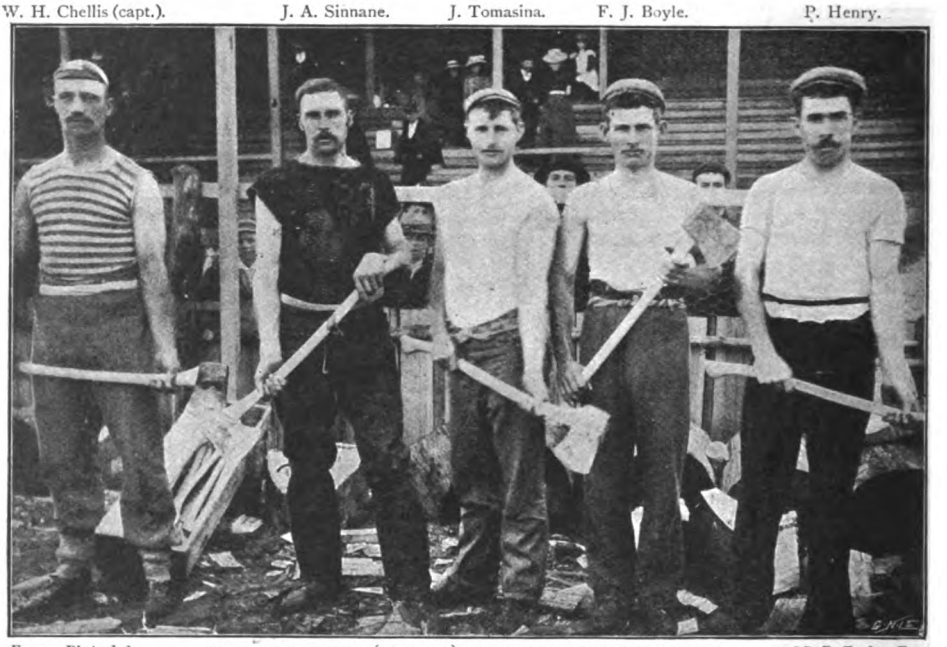
It has been the aim and hope of many to see a meeting between a team of the best bushmen in America and some Tasmanians, and the latter have several times issued challenges, but to no purpose. When W. H. Chellis won the championship he felled the block 6ft. 4in. in girth in the record time of 4min. 8¼sec.

Another notable event was the underhand championship chop; that is, chopping through a log 6ft. 4in. in girth whilst it was in a lying position such as is occupied by a tree when it has been felled. There were fourteen competitors, including five from New South Wales, one from West Australia, three from Victoria, the balance hailing from Tasmania. As in the standing block chopping match, the excitement started with the first blow, until J. M. Mackinolty, of Victoria, cut through his block amid deafening cheers, and a blow later another Victorian, Bryan, also severed his block, and a Tasmanian in C. Hutton secured third honours.



THOMAS REEVES, EX-CHAMPION CHOPPER—THE MOST POPULAR AXEMAN WHO EVER COMPETED.
From a Photo. by Marchant & Co., Latrobe, Tas.

W. H. Chellis (capt.). J. A. Sinnane. J. Tomasina. F. J. Boyle. P. Henry.



From a Photo. by] THE WINNING TEAM (ENGLAND) IN THE INTERNATIONAL MATCH. *[G. P. Taylor, Tas.*

Another interesting event was the champion sawing match, the men to cut through a similar sized log (6ft. 4in.) in the quickest time. There were only a trio of competitors, but in spite of this excitement ran very high, and there was great cheering when Thos. Pettitt, of Sprint, Tasmania, cut through his log in the marvellously quick time of 1min. 49sec., defeating the holder of the championship, R. Chatwin, of Kindred, Tasmania, rather easily.

Another match that to those who understand not what men can do appears marvellous is the double-handed sawing match—*i.e.*, one man on each end of the saw. A log 2ft. in diameter has to be cut, and this event was won by Chellis and Hutton, of Tasmania, from a large field, they cutting through a 2ft. log in 34½sec.

To see these men sawing, anyone might easily be pardoned for thinking they were cutting through cheese rather than stringybark logs of the same quality as some of the paving blocks now being used somewhere in London. It might also be noted that this pace is faster than can ordinarily be cut by steam.

The winning saw in each of the sawing events was sharpened by Mr. A. Goold, of Sprint, Tasmania, who has earned a world-

From a Photo. by] THE CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH—LYING BLOCKS. *[G. P. Taylor, Tas.*

wide reputation for his skill in this particular.

But the most interesting features of the Axemen's Carnival of 1899 were the matches in axes and saws by international teams. These contests were inaugurated for the purpose of giving the manufacturers of Great Britain an opportunity to prove to the world that they could produce axes and saws equal to the tools made by the Americans. For years the latter have practically monopolized the trade of Australia, for the simple reason that they were "up to date."

From a Photo. by] PREPARING FOR THE SAWING MATCH. *[G. P. Taylor, Ulverston, Tas.*

For this the winning manufacturer in each case was to receive a gold medal, whilst the winning teams won large prizes. Each manufacturer who entered sent his lot of axes or saws, and these were sharpened to "correct pitch" prior to the day of the contest. For axes, eight teams competed, three representing England, Elwell, Brades, and Gilpin, axes; whilst for America, Kelly, Sharps, Plumb, Underhill, Hubbards. In the first round the results were :—

Elwell Axes (England), 28 points, beat Kelly Axes (America), 27 points.

Brades Axes (England), 31 points, beat Hubbards Axes (America), 24 points.

Sharps Axes (America), 28 points, beat Gilpin Axes (England), 27 points.

Plumb Axes (America), 32 points, beat Underhill Axes (America), 23 points.

SECOND ROUND.

Brades, 29 points, beat Elwell, 26 points.

Plumb, 31 points, beat Sharps, 23 points.

FINAL HEAT.—Brades (England), 29 points, beat Plumb (America), 26 points.

The final was a magnificent match for the supremacy between England and America; the teams were as follows :—

ENGLAND.—W. H. Chellis (captain), J. A. Sinnane, J. Tomasina, P. Henry, and F. J. Boyle.

AMERICA.—J. Buckingham (captain), C. Hutton, S. Johnston, N. Manson, and A. Simpson.

From a Photo. by] THE SAWING MATCH IN FULL SWING. *[G. P. Taylor, Ulverston, Tas.*

Chellis was the first to get his log down; Hutton and Buckingham followed, and then Sinnane's block fell, and the teams were even. Toma-

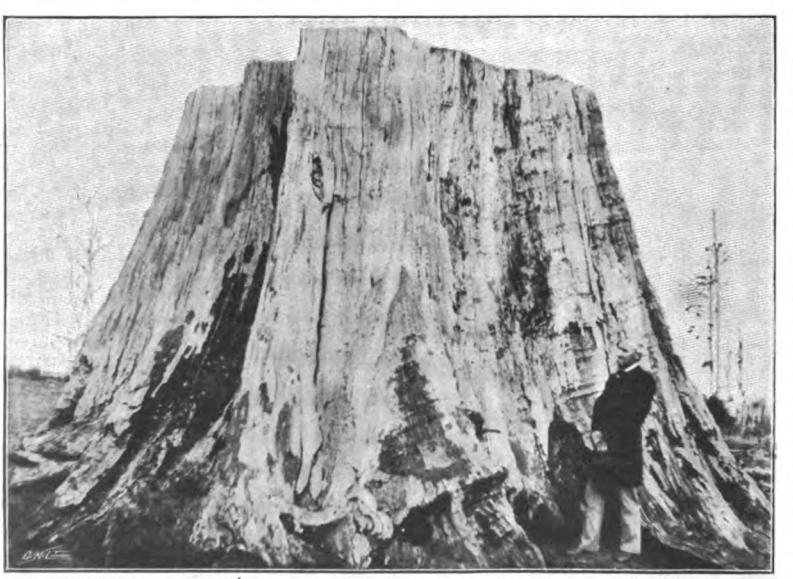
sina for England next brought his block to grass, and a blow later Johnston for America did likewise, and again the points were even. Henry then downed his block amid cheers, and England led and was not again overhauled, and the English axes gained a wonderful victory by three points.

A COUNTRY CHOPPING MATCH.
From a Photo. by G. P. Taylor, Ulverston, Tas.

As soon as the match was over, the writer in a few words spoke of the contest, saying he was proud of England's win, and called for cheers, which were given for America, for England, for the manufacturers, etc. Loud and long-continued cheering was indulged in, and it is a noteworthy fact that these cheers were given beneath a flag bearing the combined national flags of Great Britain and America entwined, sent to the association by the Kelly Axe Company, of America.

In this day of unions there seems quite a possibility of a greater union, as suggested by that flag—a union of the English-speaking races of the world; and if that should come about under one great confederacy, no matter what the form of Government, the Anglo-Saxon race would then dominate the world absolutely, notwithstanding the slight reverses a small portion of our army has met with in South Africa up to the time of writing. There is nothing but good could come of such an alliance or federation, and it is surely coming, though possibly the writer may not live to see it.

Although England defeated America for pride of place with axes, such was not the case with saws. Three American makers entered and one English, but the latter failed to come to the starting point, and the Atkins's saws of America scored a notable victory over the two other American makers.



A STUMP IN A SETTLER'S BACK YARD—SHOWING THE ENORMOUS SIZE OF THE TREES.
From a Photograph.

Of course, there were many other notable events, and the association paid away a large amount of prize-money; and as many a selector won a fairly large cheque, the amount so gained will help to carry him along until the day his farm is sufficiently clear to keep him.

The Fairy with the Grey Beard.

By Winifred Graham.

I.

"WHEN Mr. Lionel comes in send him at once to my study."

The words were spoken peremptorily by an elderly gentleman with a sharp, deeply-lined face, and narrow slit eyes. Morgan, the butler, knew from his master's tone that Mr. Lionel Trollope had in some way violated the paternal authority. With a sedate "Yes, sir," Morgan retreated, feeling a sense of benign pity for the breezy, blue-eyed youth—the only son of a bookworm and recluse.

"Wonder what Mr. Lionel has been up to now," Morgan remarked to his fellow-servants. "The master looks black as thunder this afternoon. I don't see he can expect a young gentleman to be always at home—when the place is as dull as ditch-water. But, there! master might as well be at the North Pole for all the company he sees. Folks don't want to call to be growled and grumbled at. The fact is there are only two thoughts in his head—books and roses. If he's indoors, then it's them fusty, musty volumes; if he's out in the garden—all he thinks of is killing grubs and snorting over gloire de Dijons!"

With this scathing assertion Morgan waived the subject, and collapsed into reverie.

Meanwhile the bookworm gazed unseeingly upon the open page before him. His brain was busy with wrath, he forgot the soft memories of youth, the clinging hand long mouldered into dust, of a sweet-voiced wife who used to say: "Don't be hard on little Lionel."

"ESCORTING MISS ARCHVILLE FROM THE THEATRE."

And now "little Lionel" was a full-grown man—popular with everyone, through the effervescence of his sunny nature.

A glance round Mr. Trollope's study, the largest and most luxurious room in the house, showed him to be a man of taste and a collector. Besides his books, the Gobelin tapestry, the statue in bronze of St. Simon, and the model of the ship in which William Prince of Orange came to England, claimed attention. For these things were more to him than people of flesh and blood, inhabiting the outside world of Wolverditton, from which he withheld the patronage of his attention. Not entirely self-absorbed, he would on occasions assist the deserving poor, if the vicar of the parish brought the case under his notice, in a diplomatic and convincing manner.

Now he was thinking of his son, the lad from whom he expected great things, and even as he pondered the door opened unceremoniously. A tall young man with curly fair hair, and moustache of a deeper shade, stood before him.

"Oh! so you've come at last?" muttered the bookworm, closing the heavy volume on his desk, and tapping its cover with nervous, irritable fingers.

"Yes, I did not know you wanted me till Morgan gave me your message," replied Lionel, "or I should have been in sooner."

Mr. Trollope made a sound like a little growl.

"Hum!" he said, "you think because I don't go out and about in the world, that I sit at home hearing and seeing nothing. Allow me to tell you, sir, that in this you are mistaken. I do see—

and I do hear—I am neither deaf nor blind—and rumour carries fast, evil rumour especially. Now explain, if you can, why you violate my expressed wishes and make for yourself associates of low-born actresses—women of the stage?"

"Really, I don't understand you," exclaimed Lionel, nevertheless flushing slightly.

"Well, put it in the singular," continued Mr. Trollope, relentlessly. "Can you deny that yesterday afternoon you were seen escorting a certain Miss Archville from the theatre at which she is playing, after the Wednesday matinée?"

"No—I do not deny it."

"There, you see I was right, and I repeat again—a low-born actress, a penniless——"

Lionel rose to his feet, an angry gleam in the blue eyes usually so smiling and tranquil.

"She is not low-born—nor penniless, for the matter of that," he burst out, hotly, "and I must beg you will not use these insulting terms to a lady who is a friend of mine."

"Oh! I know the sort of friend!" sneered Mr. Trollope, with bitter emphasis. "I'm not such a hermit but I remember the way of the world. When young men make friends with such women—they generally end——"

"Father," broke in Lionel, "take care what you are saying! Don't you see you are talking in the dark? When you hear all the circumstances you will be sorry for your hasty judgment. Miss Archville is——"

"I don't want to know anything about her, I refuse to listen," thundered Mr. Trollope, glaring at the offender through his spectacles. "But mark my words, sir, I'll stand no nonsense. If this liaison continue, if I don't assure myself of its ceasing instantly, I will cut you off with a shilling—you shall be no son of mine!"

Mr. Trollope struck the desk with his fist violently. When his temper was thoroughly roused argument became useless. Lionel, forbidden to speak in his own defence, ended the interview by withdrawing his presence and undiplomatically slamming the door after him.

"PERHAPS THERE IS A FAIRY IN THAT GARDEN."

II.

A SMALL girl, with large brown eyes, set in a plump, rosy face, danced along the asphalt walks of Wolverditton. It was not from sheer lightness of heart, but merely to avoid the dulness of Maria's slow, even steps. Maria, the nursemaid, called her back, and clutched her by the hand.

"Come and walk like a little lady," she said; "I can't have you rushing about all over the place!"

"Don't want to be a little lady," pouted Miss Joan Egerton.

Maria looked shocked.

"You see," Joan continued, wisely, "little ladies, as you call them, have always to be so stupidly good. They must not go out alone, or climb trees, or—or break things," she added, vaguely. "If you make me walk, instead of run, you must just tell me stories—fairy stories for choice."

The child glanced up plaintively at Maria's unimaginative face. To an older mind the woman's stolid expression would have dispelled all hope of a possible romance. But young hearts never despair, and Joan's anticipation rose as she made her request. Maria's mind was a blank; her stolid brain could weave no fairy fantasy to satisfy the craving of a child's desire. In order to turn the train of Joan's thoughts she paused by an iron gate, and pointed through the bars. "Look at the pretty flowers," she said.

Joan peered into the garden, with her nose against the gate rails. A long line of rose trees in full bloom arrested her attention.

"White, pink, red, yellow"—she counted the colours on her

fingers. "Perhaps there is a fairy in that garden — a rose-fairy, like the one in the pantomime last winter."

Maria considered a minute. She knew the house and its master well. Then she nodded her head and answered, mysteriously: "Yes, you are right, Miss Joan: a fairy lives in there, just as kind a fairy as ever you could hope to meet, and, if you are a good girl, I'll tell you all about it."

With this alluring prospect in view, Joan consented to walk demurely by Maria's side.

"It was the winter when mother fell ill, before I went out to service," she explained. "Father was not strong enough to work, and we hadn't any money. Suddenly one day, when things was just at their worst, help came. It appears the vicar found a good fairy in that very house, with plenty of money to spare, and the fairy sent the money to us just at Christmas time, with a bunch of roses for mother. In fairy gardens the roses never die."

This strange intelligence made a deeper impression on Joan than Maria could have guessed. A bewildering thrill passed through the silk-frocked frame, while the brown eyes grew big with wonder—and sudden hope.

"You—you were very unhappy," the child gasped, "and the fairy put everything right?"

Joan's fingers tightened with excitement over Maria's hand. The latter nodded in reply to the eager question.

"Everything," she said. "Mother got well, and father went away for a sea trip — he was able to work when he came home."

"What was the fairy like?" asked Joan, eagerly, her mind full of magic wands, spangles, and white wings.

"He was a funny-looking fairy," laughed Maria; "a fairy with a grey beard."

Joan paled from disappointment.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, and her jaw dropped.

"But they are the best kind of fairies; they can do the most for you," Maria declared.

Her tone was singularly convincing.

For a long while Joan walked in silence, busy with her own thoughts. When Maria turned to go back, a breathless wonder seized the child, as step by step they drew nearer to the rose garden.

"You will let me look just once again," she pleaded, when the iron gates came in sight. She had grown accustomed to the thought of a fairy with a grey beard, the first paralyzing effect having worn off after reflection. Maria smiled at the keen interest displayed, lingering a moment, while Joan feasted her eyes upon the magic garden where this strange freak of a fairy lived.

The moment Joan got home she crept softly to her sister's room and pushed the door open.

"It's only me, Patricia."

"A TALL GIRL STOOD BEFORE A MIRROR."

A tall girl, gowned in white, stood before a mirror, brushing a cloud of golden hair, which positively gleamed in the morning sunshine.

"Oh! are you getting up?" from the small questioner. "Is your headache better?"

"Yes, dear."

"And you're not crying now?"

"No," with a faint smile.

"I'm so glad," cooed Joan, as she nestled against the soft folds of Patricia's gown, "because it is going to come all right, and you need not be unhappy any more."

Patricia's eyes flashed with sudden light,

as she turned them eagerly upon Joan's flushed face. The brush fell from her hand.

"What do you mean? How do you know? You can't have heard."

"I—I mean," stammered Joan, "I am going to ask a good fairy; it's a wonderful secret of mine!"

Patricia stifled a sigh of disappointment — a sigh that was almost a groan.

"Oh, I see," she said. The glimmer of tears hung trembling under her long lashes.

III.

SINCE the previous day when Lionel left his father's study, with set lips and a dangerous glint in his blue eyes, the two men had not spoken. Mr. Trollope nursed his resentment in sulky silence — a settled cloud on his wrinkled brow.

"If he dare!" the old man muttered to himself, as he sat alone in his sanctum; "if he dare flout me!"

The window leading to the garden stood open, to admit a cool breeze, and the roses peeped in, their faces warm from contact with the sun. Involuntarily, Mr. Trollope turned his eyes towards the garden, as if compelled. Was it that his ear caught the sound of a light footfall on the gravel, or had he seen a tiny shadow mingling with the sunshine, as it played upon the curtains? Anyhow, he kept his gaze riveted upon the open window, as if expecting something.

A lovely child, dressed in the pink of the rose petals, strayed to the threshold, with hesitating steps. Hatless she stood, her hair loosely framing her eager face, from which a pair of bright eyes, twinkling like stars, looked straight across at Mr. Trollope, sitting in his big arm-chair.

He was too astonished to speak, as the bold intruder advanced, walking bravely enough now towards the amazed old man. She came right up to him, laying one hand on the arm of the chair, and just feeling him with the tips of her disengaged fingers, as if to make sure he was real. Having satisfied herself on this point, she smiled up at him confidentially. He smiled back, somewhat grimly, it is true, but still he smiled.

"Are you a fairy?" she asked, in one of those big, childish whispers which travel round a room resonantly.

Mr. Trollope gave a start of surprise; he drew his eyebrows together, and coughed nervously.

"'ARE YOU A FAIRY?' SHE ASKED."

"A fairy, my little girl! Whatever makes you think that?"

"Oh, I don't think—I know," she answered, triumphantly; "because Maria, my nurse, told me. I know it is you—Maria said the fairy had a grey beard!" Joan stammered out the words, so great was her excitement.

Mr. Trollope listened to the intelligence with profound interest.

"You can do everything," the child continued, leaning up against him coaxingly; "that is why I came here to-day. Why, even your roses grow in the winter, because it's a magic garden!"

"Do they really?" exclaimed the old man, becoming engrossed in the conversation.

"Yes—you know they do," laughing, "and Maria said you were just as good a fairy as anyone could hope to meet, though you had got a grey beard!"

"Most obliging of Maria to give me such an estimable character, I'm sure," murmured Mr. Trollope, gratified as well as amused at the child's confidence.

"Oh! Maria knows," his uninvited guest informed him; "so I thought I would just get you to make it all right for Patricia. She is my sister, and I simply can't bear to

see her cry. She's ever so unhappy about something, that was why I came here to-day. I had to slip away when nobody was looking, and I could not wait to get my hat. It is the first time I have been out alone, and I ran all the way. I asked a lady to open your gate for me, it was so heavy, and the handle seemed rather high up. I was looking for you a long time in the garden, for I thought fairies always lived out of doors."

"No; I come in sometimes just for a change."

"And do you like the house?" she inquired, politely.

"Well, I don't exactly mind it," Mr. Trollope owned, with a glance round his spacious study. He felt for the moment as if the unexpected advent of this pretty, confiding child had cast a spell over the sombre room, making it verily and indeed a charmed palace.

He found himself half unconsciously stroking her tumbled hair, and the silky texture of those sunny locks stirred some hidden chord of emotion in his breast.

"Little girl," he said, "you are very sure of your fancies, but even fairies may fail us sometimes, however deeply we trust in them. When you grow older you will find the fairies drifting farther away, and the hard things of the world creeping in! I don't want to shatter your illusions—Heaven knows, they are precious enough, though they perish so soon—but you must not be too disappointed if you find out I am not a fairy after all."

He spoke with intense earnestness, and a mist gathered before his eyes, blotting out the grave face upturned to his, for Joan's smiles were fading now.

"Oh!" she cried, "I knew it all along—I knew you were only a gnome!"

This was a fresh surprise for Mr. Trollope; he blinked his eyelids, while his mind groped back to the folk-lore of his forgotten childhood.

"Let me see, what is a gnome?" he asked, acknowledging his ignorance, frankly.

"Oh! you know," Joan persisted, speaking incredulously, "a little thing that runs about in a wood. But I think you look too nice for a gnome," she added, on second thoughts; "and, then, Maria always speaks the truth, because she says if people don't, they'll never get to Heaven. You see, Maria has several relations there already, so she has to be particular."

Mr. Trollope did not understand children in the least, yet he keenly appreciated Joan. The wonder with which her eyes were riveted upon him made the old man feel a stranger to himself; her quaint speech pleased his imagination.

"Are you quite alone here?" she asked. "Haven't you any subjects under you? Perhaps there is a fairy queen—I should like to see her!"

"There was a queen once," he answered, his voice dropping almost to a whisper. "But she has gone away. Would you like to see her portrait?"

He fumbled with something at his watch-chain—a gold locket, which opened as he pressed a spring. Joan clambered on his knee in order to inspect the picture. A sweet face peeped out of the locket, seeming to smile at the child.

"Isn't she lovely!" Joan exclaimed. "I wish she had not gone; it *is* a pity! Where is she now?"

"In Heaven," murmured the old man, staring down at the picture, a far-away expression in his eyes.

"Oh! with Maria's friends!"

As she spoke the door opened, and Morgan, with his solemn face and stately bearing, entered the room. He was carrying a card on a silver salver, which he nearly dropped at the sight of his master earnestly conversing with a hatless mite in a pink smock.

Mr. Trollope started too at being thus discovered, and half pushed the child from him. She was so sure of his good-nature that the action failed to shatter her confidence, but, attracted at that moment by the model ship, she strayed away, leaving Mr. Trollope under Morgan's stern eye.

"A lady has called, sir."

Mr. Trollope peered at the card through his glasses.

"Miss Egerton," he said. "Who the dickens is Miss Egerton?"

"Lives in the big house at the corner, sir," replied Morgan, in an undertone; "the Hon. Miss Egerton. She is thought a deal of in the neighbourhood. I think she has come after the little girl." As he spoke he indicated Joan, flitting about amongst Mr. Trollope's treasures.

"Show her in, Morgan."

The words came sharply from the old man's lips; he drew his brows together to a puzzled frown, and thought deeply.

Miss Egerton, the Hon. Miss Egerton—the class of woman with whom Lionel might have been expected to fall in love! Instead, he was wasting himself on an actress—some brazen favourite of the boards, born most

likely in the gutter, risen from the last realm of—nowhere!

An excited childish voice dispelled his reverie.

"You really must settle about Patricia," it was saying in his ear, "because that is why I came. Oh!" as the door opened again,

"WHY, HERE SHE IS!"

"why, here she is! Have you a magic wand after all? Did you make her come?"

Mr. Trollope rose to bow courteously. A tall, golden-haired girl stood before him. Her eyes were large and hazel, with those strange dark spots in them which make for beauty. A trifle pale, her face lit up with a wonderful smile at sight of little Joan perched on the arm of Mr. Trollope's chair.

"We were so frightened," she said. "Joan disappeared! A friend told us she had been seen in this garden. I could hardly believe it, but I came to find out. I don't know how to apologize sufficiently for her intrusion."

The girl had a low, sweet voice, which reminded Mr. Trollope of the voice which used to say: "Don't be hard on little Lionel."

And this was the sister whose sorrow he had been asked to cure, who was "ever so unhappy about something."

"Pray—pray—don't apologize," he begged. "I am only too pleased to think little Miss Joan strayed in such a safe direction. I rather fancy my roses attracted her. I have a fine show of blossoms which can be seen from the road."

He was terribly afraid lest Miss Egerton should discover the fallacy of the fairy, for in feminine society Mr. Trollope was intensely shy. He flew to his roses for protection, though Joan was quite ready to contradict him.

"I came because Maria said——" broke in the little voice, but Mr. Trollope interrupted hastily:—

"Perhaps you would like to see some specimen trees; roses are a hobby of mine. I am quite learned on the subject!"

He hustled Joan into the garden, as Miss Egerton gladly consented. Her eyes wore an enigmatical expression as they followed the figure of the old man.

Once amongst his rose trees he appeared entirely at his ease, discoursing upon the various species animatedly, now and again plucking the choicest for his fair companion.

"There's that son of mine," he said, pointing across the lawn to a figure in a riding-suit making its way towards the stables. "He is a wild young beggar, but I should like to introduce him to you, Miss Egerton, if you have no objection. He will be somewhat surprised to find me with visitors, for you may have heard I am quite a recluse."

Miss Egerton smiled.

"Then you are being very good to us," she said, and her eyes travelled across the lawn.

"Lionel!" shouted Mr. Trollope. "Li-o-nel!"

He had not spoken to his son since the previous day, but his anger temporarily thawed under the magnetic influence of Patricia.

Lionel looked round astonished at seeing the strangers. To discover his father busily entertaining a beautiful girl, while a small, pink-clad child played at his feet, was a

revelation indeed! No wonder the young man came eagerly forward, amazed to see, and relieved at, this sudden change.

Without explaining the reason of Miss Egerton's presence, Mr. Trollope murmured an introduction, noting, with inward satisfaction, that the lady seemed favourably impressed with his scapegrace son. She smiled, and grew unexpectedly red, till her cheeks were the colour of the scarlet roses. Lionel looked equally pleased. Mr. Trollope, observing this, became suddenly engrossed with little Joan, allowing the child to drag him away on an exploring expedition.

"And how do you like my magic garden?" he asked, when they were out of earshot.

"It isn't so very different to other gardens," Joan confessed, a touch of disappointment in her tone.

"Perhaps," Mr. Trollope replied, "you will now believe I was not a fairy after all—perhaps, my dear, without knowing it, you were the fairy yourself."

"Oh, no," laughed Joan, "I wash, and eat, and go to bed. I couldn't be a fairy!"

The old man sighed.

"Of course," the child continued, "I see Maria was right. Patricia looks quite happy—since you worked the spell."

Joan's simple faith staggered Mr. Trollope! As she made this calm assertion he glanced back, catching sight of Miss Egerton's face, which brought the force of the child's words home to him.

"By Jove!" he muttered to himself; "I believe the boy is making love to her already! What a gay young dog he is! Yet only yesterday his head was turned by a designing minx of the —— Theatre. Well, I'll get him out of that, if the luck turns and he settles his affections on something decent!"

IV.

MR. TROLLOPE and his son stood side by side at the garden gate, watching two figures as they vanished down the road. One—tall, graceful, and slim—did not look back; the other turned repeatedly to wave an energetic hand.

"A beautiful girl, Miss Egerton!" muttered Mr. Trollope, senior, with a shake of his grey head. "Everything to recommend her. Youth, position, looks, fortune! Why on earth can't you fall in love with a girl like that?"

"I *have* fallen in love with her!" said Lionel.

A low whistle escaped the old man. He looked at his son critically.

"Not taken long about it, eh? Well, well, I don't know what this generation is coming to! In my day, young men's hearts were not quite so susceptible; but you know my opinion of your other affair—so I can but be glad. Miss Egerton has intelligence as well as beauty: she would be a prize worth the winning!"

They were strolling back to the house, apparently forgetful of the quarrel which had divided them since the previous afternoon.

"Oh, yes," replied Lionel, "if you had not so entirely given up the world and society, you would know that Miss Egerton is remarkably talented—in fact, one of the cleverest women of the day. She has written the most popular comedy now running in London. Her people encourage her to write, and are proud of her success. Her last play was accepted on the condition that, for the first few weeks at least, she would herself embody the character of the heroine. She takes no salary, but plays from the sheer love of art, under the name of Archville. I asked her to be my wife only two nights ago. Though deigning to love me, she made me promise to keep our engagement secret, till she relinquished her part in the play. I pledged her my word, and for that reason could not speak when you took me to task. I wrote detailing our quarrel, and she has been fretting all day at the thought of our estrangement. She now begs me to tell you the whole truth, she nearly told you herself—but Joan was all ears and eyes!"

Lionel paused—the words had literally tumbled out of his mouth. He stood before his father, panting as if for breath. Mr. Trollope appeared dazed; he stared at his son blankly. At last he spoke.

"Say that all over again, Lionel, I can't take it in!"

The younger man laughed merrily, ignoring the request. Then they walked on, and a moment later Mr. Trollope was laughing too.

Diving Horses.

By Albert H. Broadwell. Photographs by A. J. Johnson.

FLYING GIRAFFES, crawling elephants, or grass-eating tigers are merely possibilities, but diving horses are an accomplished fact. The horses whose doings we propose to describe dive for the very fun of it—there is no prodding or pushing; they require a great deal of holding when they scent water in the distance or suspect it to be anywhere within a hundred-mile radius.

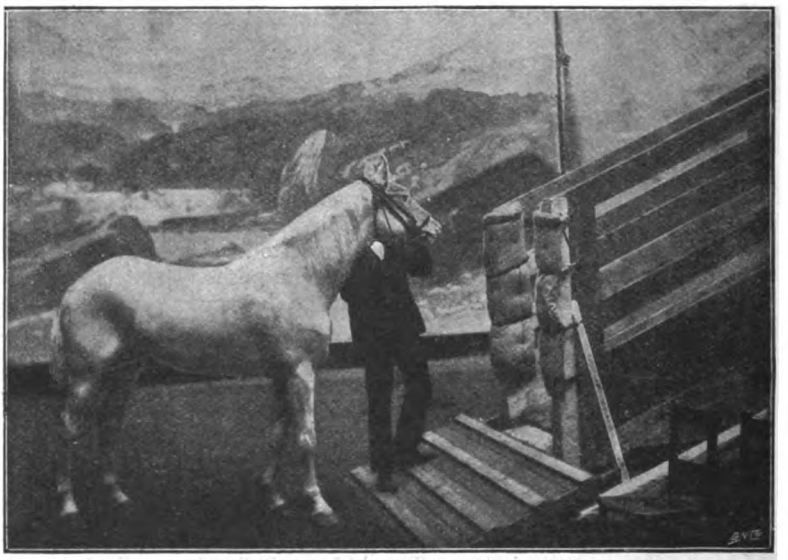
They will not run in harness, neither will they be ridden like common horses; they have been accustomed, from their very earliest years, to a life of freedom, of wild rushes and plunges, in the Everglade Swamps of Florida.

Not very long ago London was startled by huge hoardings showing a milk-white steed diving head-foremost into a rushing torrent some thirty feet below. London shrugged its shoulders, said it was all bunkum, and then went—as London always does and ever will do—to see the fun.

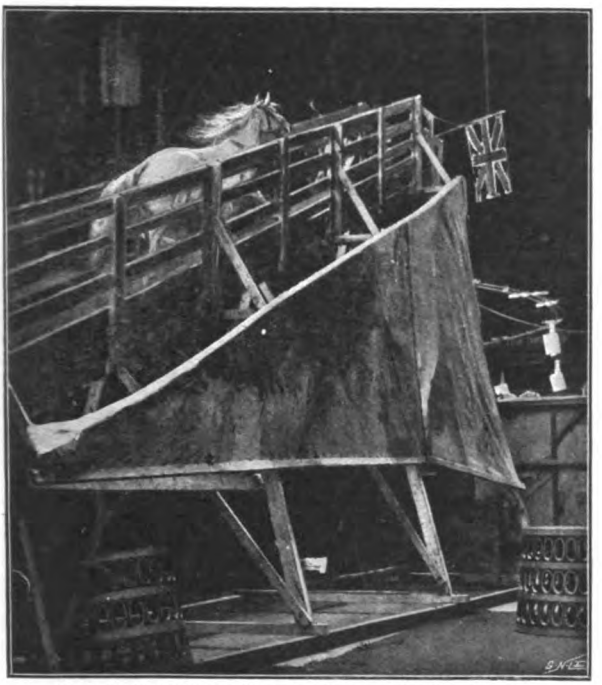
London flocked to the Crystal Palace in its tens of thousands, and when London got there its amazement knew no bounds when the horses' clever diving feats actually took place amid thunders of applause.

Mr. H. Gillman, the popular manager of the Crystal Palace, had, with characteristic energy, secured the diving-horse show as his very own and "exclusive." Moreover, he very kindly extended his usual courtesy to the writer, inasmuch as he offered every facility for the taking of the extraordinary pictures which serve to illustrate this article.

In order to get some interesting particulars about those two beautiful milk-white diving steeds we secured an interview with Captain Boynton, the great showman who owns the immense pleasure grounds and water-chutes in Coney Island and Woodside Park, Philadelphia. In the course of our chat we learned that as soon as Captain Boynton heard of the diving horses and their marvellous performances he communicated with their owner and trainer, Professor Geo. F. Holloway, of Bancroft, Iowa, and secured their performances for his chutes at Coney Island.



WAITING AT THE FOOT OF THE INCLINED PLANE.



VIEW OF INCLINED PLANE FROM BEHIND—HORSE RUNNING UP.

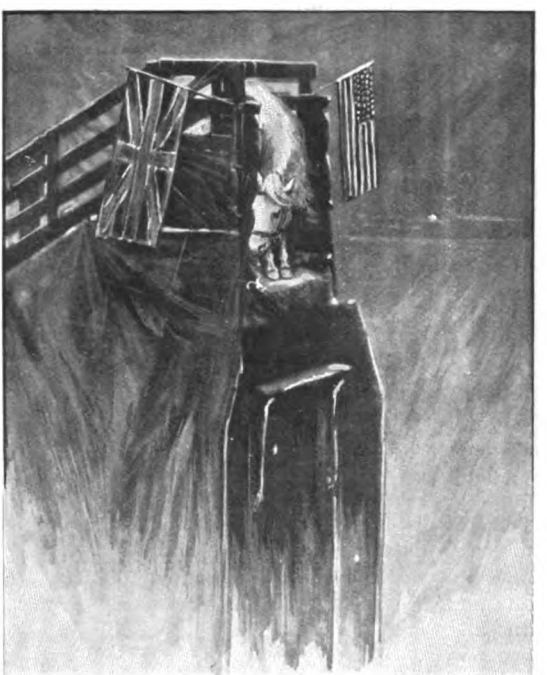
Captain Boynton had much of interest to communicate, inasmuch as he has the horses under his management to "do" the Continent, and especially the Paris Exhibition, under the care of Professor Holloway's nephew, Mr. John Whalen, whose thoughtfulness for the animals' welfare is charming to witness.

It appears that King and Queen, as these equine beauties are justly called, are actually descendants of the wild horses that in times gone by disported themselves on the Everglades in Florida. Water, it seems, is partly their natural element, inasmuch as swamps of vast extent are to be found in the Everglades, and part of the distances in their wanderings, which these animals had to cover, had to be done by swimming.

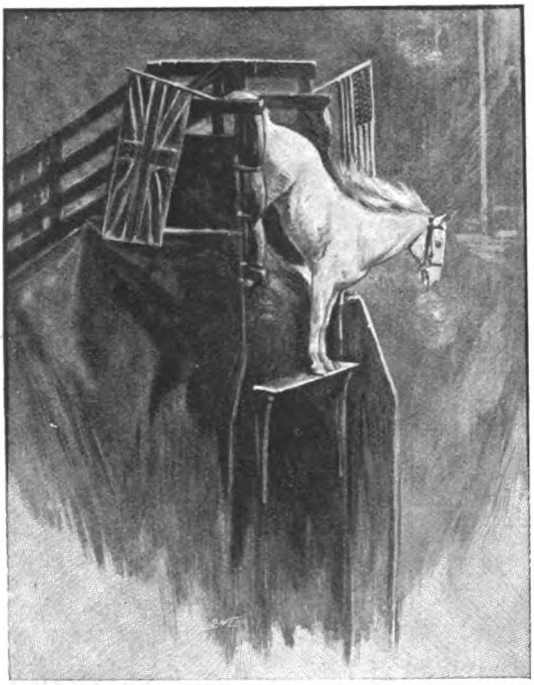
This interesting fact goes a long way to prove that no compulsion has ever been necessary in their training. When they were colts, Professor Holloway's sons used to ride these pets when going for their morning dip, and strangely enough the horses would dive after their masters and follow their gambols in the water.

Another curious and significant fact is that Professor Holloway, who is a great breeder of horses, and owns thousands of them on the prairies, has never been successful in training another pair to perform the same diving feats. He selected eighty-five of the most likely animals from his stock, but met with failure every time. None of these were of the same breed as King and Queen. Curiously enough, *all* the horses under trial dived with their heads held high, while King and Queen always dive head-foremost, as will be seen in our illustrations entitled "leaping" and "nearing the water."

At Coney Island Captain Boynton possesses an extensive lake, wherein the horses dive from an elevated platform. Lakes are not made to order, however, so that in their travels the horses are accompanied by a tank, which is fitted into an excavation made for the purpose; the water in winter and autumn is always kept at an almost uniform temperature, somewhere between 65deg. and 85deg., the water being warmed by means of steam-pipes — a precaution which is, of course, unnecessary in the summer months. The elevated platform also accompanies the horses wherever they go.



ARRIVED AT TOP, KING HAS A GOOD LOOK AT HIS AUDIENCE.



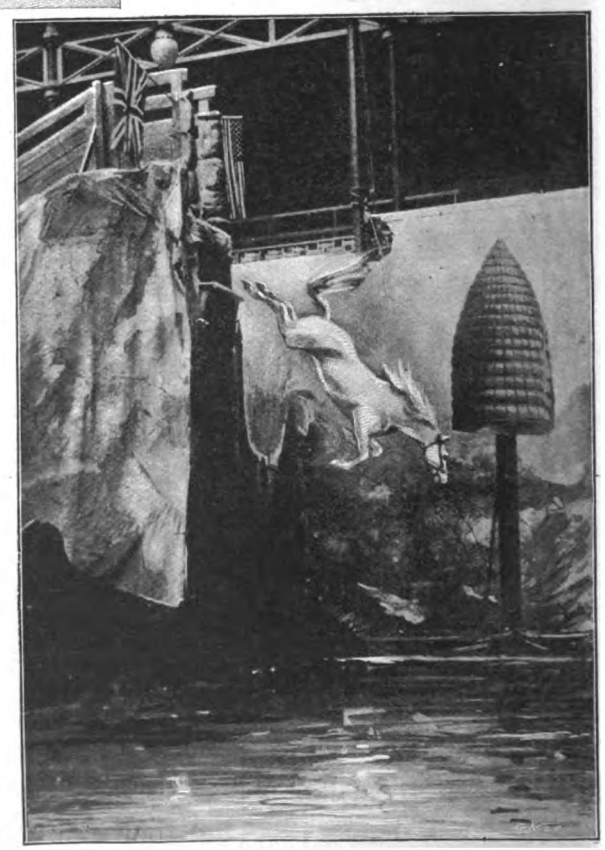
PREPARING TO LEAP.

Mr. Whalen, who has charge of these pets, has given the writer some interesting particulars as to the way in which these beautiful creatures are cared for. It appears that during their trip across the Atlantic his charges had never been ill, or did they even seem to feel uncomfortable. They had extra large padded stalls, each having as much room to himself as would fall to the lot of six less illustrious creatures. Cleverly enough, they made a point of lying down whenever the weather was rough, and the captain, with the majority of the passengers, used to visit them and feed them with dainties every day.

Their food is always examined before it is given to them, and consists of the very best grain sorted by hand, also hay of the very finest quality. In addition they get potatoes, carrots, and apples every day; their food is always kept under lock and key, and they are never, under any pretext whatsoever, left without an attendant to look after their every wish.

The horses' temperature is taken daily, and the degrees of heat in the stable are kept to a uniform standard. Their blankets, of which they possess a seemingly unlimited supply, are frequently changed, washed, and aired with as much care as the personal linen of a Vanderbilt!

Upon their arrival in London the performance seemed so exceedingly novel and daring that it was openly asserted that cruelty had to be used to make the animals go through the dives in which, as a matter of fact, they take great delight. Such assertions were speedily squashed by a thorough inspection of the show by specially deputed members of the S.P.C.A., who, in the exercise of their commendable duties, investigated charges which were found to be utterly groundless. It may be mentioned, also, that while these horses were performing in Philadelphia an agent of the S.P.C.A. was, by the special request of Professor Holloway, appointed to live with the horses during the whole time of their stay there; he remained with the

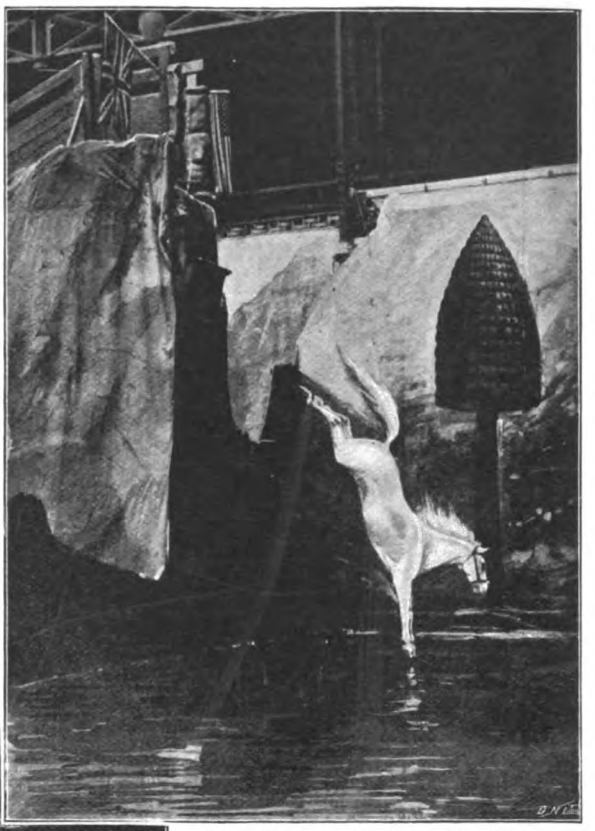


LEAPING.

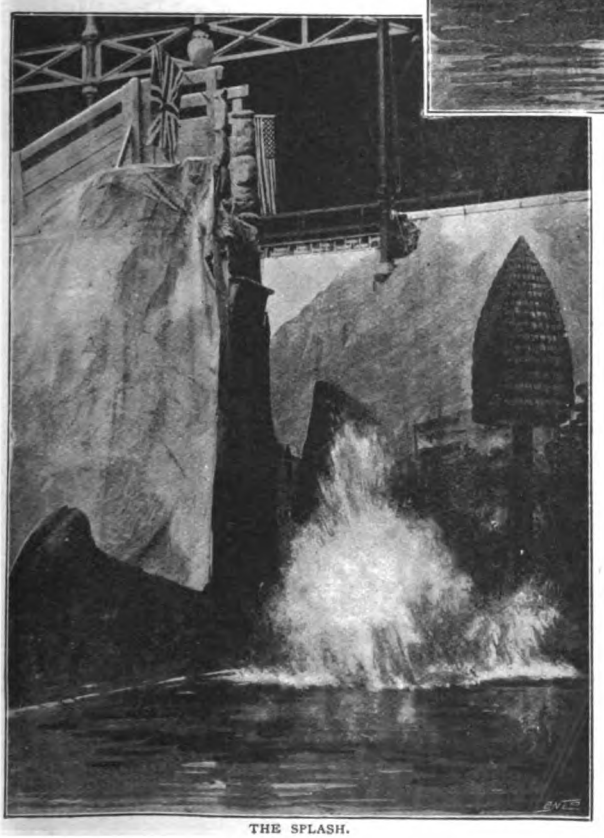
animals day and night, and it is pleasing to record that he expressed himself as entirely satisfied as to the genuineness of the horses' desire to dive of their own free will.

Immediately after their dives King and Queen expect a lump or two of sugar each, and that is a time-honoured custom with both, as Mrs. Holloway always made it a practice to reward them in that way when they had dived well in the course of regular tuition. This also explains their particular fondness for ladies.

King and Queen are passionately fond of each other and have never been separated. They have never been shod, and have also never been in harness for any length of time. In fact, they don't like harness, and they hate buggies, of which they have smashed one or two, which seems to prove once more that they are essentially children of Nature and of a breed as yet so



NEARING THE WATER—NOTE THE PERFECT DIVING ATTITUDE.

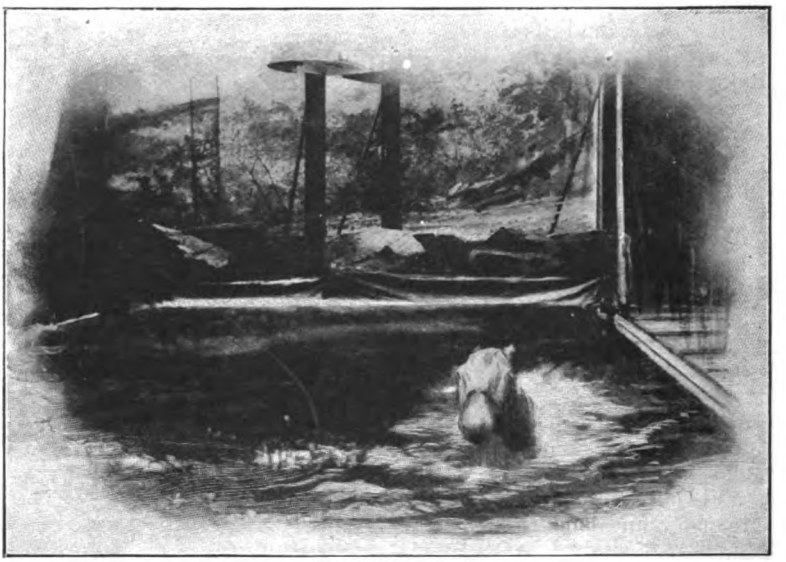


THE SPLASH.

wild as to be likened to the zebra of untamable reputation. King and Queen are pink-skinned and have black eyes, a very pretty combination, coupled with almost milk-white coats that shimmer in the sunlight like the *moiré* silk of a bridal dress.

Twenty thousand dollars have been offered for them, and yet their owner would not part with what may be reckoned to be the most unique pair of horses on earth; no fewer than two millions of people have flocked to see them in their wanderings, and small wonder, for they are assuredly as pretty a pair of steeds as ever trod the green.

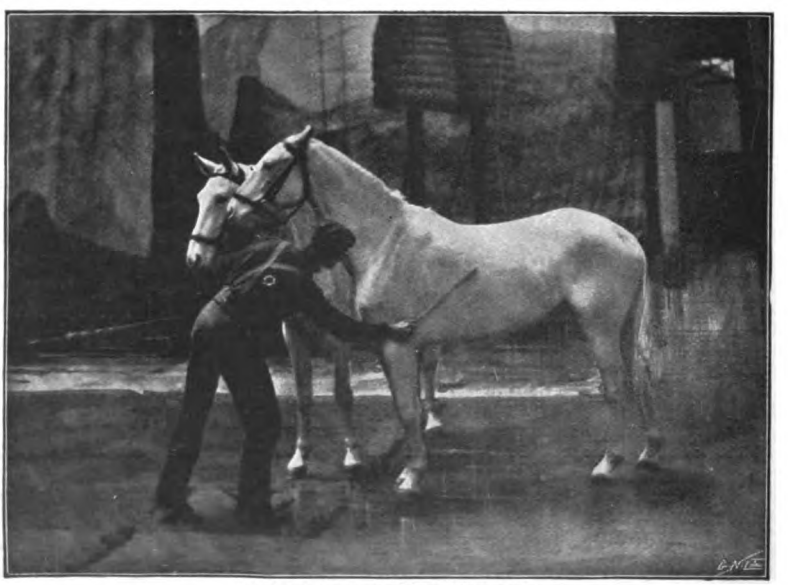
There is happily only a single dramatic incident to record in the career of these equine pets, and it occurred at Captain Boynton's show on Coney Island. Captain Boynton keeps any number of pets in his



SWIMMING TO SHORE.

waters, and among those are numbered some huge turtles. It happened that after one of the horses had dived a hard-shelled monster was discovered within less than a yard from the place where the horse had first struck the water. Had the diving animal collided with the turtle it is terrible to think what the consequences might have been. A halt was therefore called, before the second horse was allowed to go through its performance, and every endeavour was made to induce the turtle to seek more convenient quarters, but instead of doing so the obstructionist calmly sank to the bottom of the lake, at the very spot where the horse was expected to dive.

Strong measures were used: a dynamite cartridge was lowered directly over the spot where the turtle had sunk, and was fired in order to dislodge it from its awkward place of concealment. Strange to say, the animal, while duly blown out of bounds, sustained no injury beyond a thorough shaking, from which it recovered in less than a week!



BEING SCRAPED DOWN AFTER DIVING.

A Big Blast.

By Val Norton.

BEFORE THE EXPLOSION, SHOWING THE MOUTH OF THE TUNNEL.
From a Photograph.

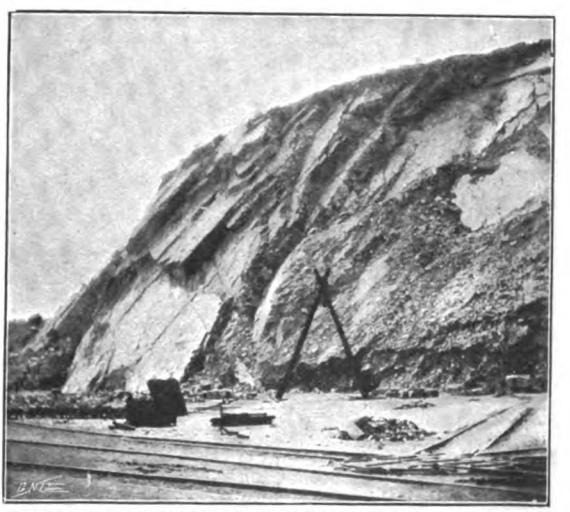
THE English tourist in passing through Cherbourg would find it a comparatively uninteresting place. The town is modern and well built, but there is no inducement to make it a stopping-place. Cherbourg owes its importance to the fact that it is a fortress of the first class, and the third naval harbour of France.

It is said that Vauban, the great French military engineer, conceived the idea of making a naval harbour at Cherbourg, in opposition to Portsmouth. The works were abandoned two or three times, but completed at length in the reign of Napoleon III., when Queen Victoria was present at the opening ceremony. The harbour and its buildings cover an area of fifty-four acres, and were hewn from the solid rock—a marvellous feat of engineering.

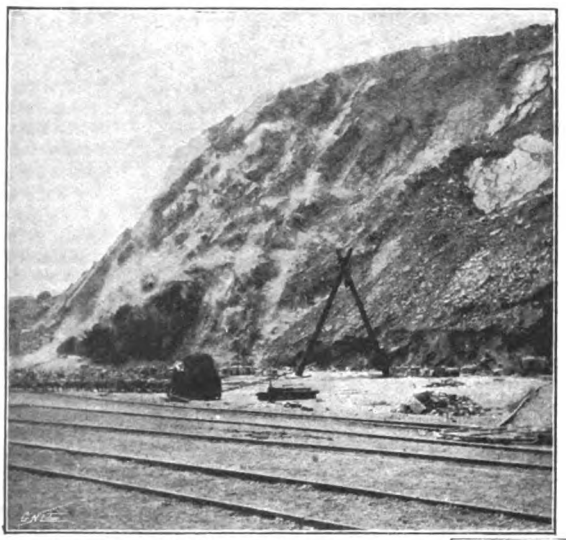
The presence of quartzite rock in the neighbourhood enabled the famous Vauban to carry out his design of the huge "digue" or breakwater, which protects the Roadstead of Cherbourg; a work which was also twice abandoned.

In July, 1899, one of the quarries near Cherbourg was the scene of a big blasting operation, when thousands of tons of stone were rent from the bosom of Mother Earth. The planning of one of these big blasts requires a considerable amount of experience and skill, as the stone is wanted in as large blocks as possible, the blocks being required for the protection of the sea-walls, and they are submerged in front of the breakwater to protect the apron of the wall.

A position must be chosen for the chambers to hold the blasting charge in such part of the rock as offers the most resistance; that is, where the seams of stone are the thickest and



SIDE VIEW OF THE SCENE, FROM THE POSITION TAKEN TO SNAP-SHOT THE EXPLOSION.
From a [*Photograph.*

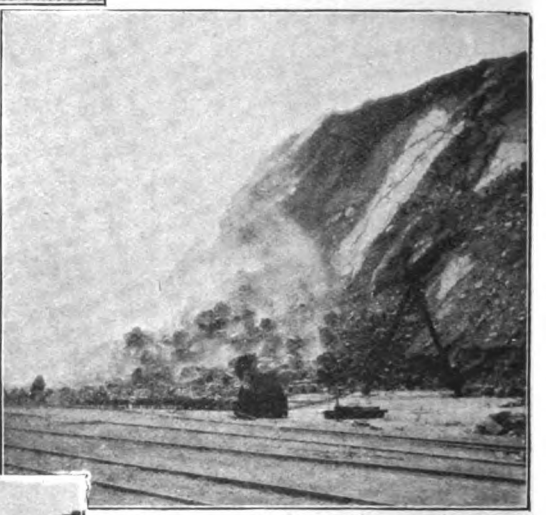


THE FIRST INDICATION OF THE EXPLOSION.
From a Photograph.

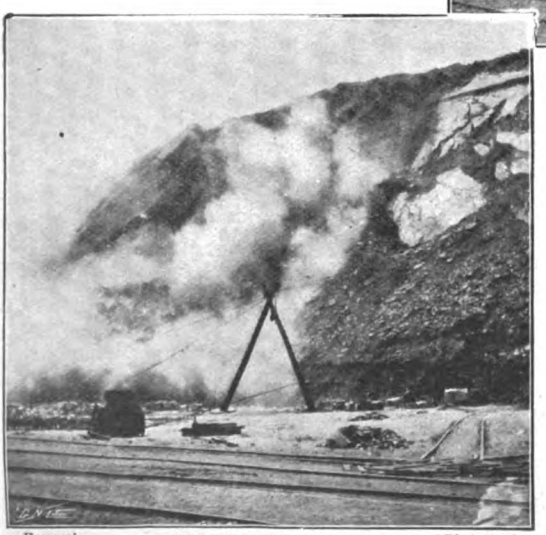
most free from fissures, which would allow the gases to escape, and so considerably reduce the force of the explosion. A place having been chosen, men were set to work to make a tunnel, 65ft. long, straight into the rock, terminating in another tunnel running at right angles both ways, thus forming a T. The two arms to right and left were each 26ft. long, and terminated in chambers to hold the charge.

It was very slow work cutting into the hard rock, and calculated only to proceed at the rate of about 15in. per diem, and at a cost of 30s. per foot; the average dimensions of the tunnels being 5ft. high by 3ft. 6in. wide. The work was done in the usual way, by drilling small holes and inserting a dynamite cartridge, which, when exploded, disintegrates the rock. When the laborious task of cutting the tunnels was finished the very delicate operation of charging the chambers was begun.

The explosives employed were Favier powder and ordinary mining powder—1,250 kilos of the former and 3,000 kilos of the latter. Favier powder is an explosive having all the properties of gunpowder,



From a] THE FINAL RUSH. *[Photograph.*



From a] THE NEXT DEVELOPMENT. *[Photograph.*

but with three times its strength. Dynamite was not used, as the blocks were wanted from one to five tons in weight, and it tends to shatter the stone too much.

The powder charges having been placed in the chambers with the greatest care, and a fulminate of mercury detonator inserted to explode them, instantaneous fuses—in duplicate—inclosed in lead-pipe are led to the mouth of the tunnel, being kept about half-way between its floor and roof. This is a very difficult operation, and the greatest care must be exercised so as not to injure the fuses incased in the lead-

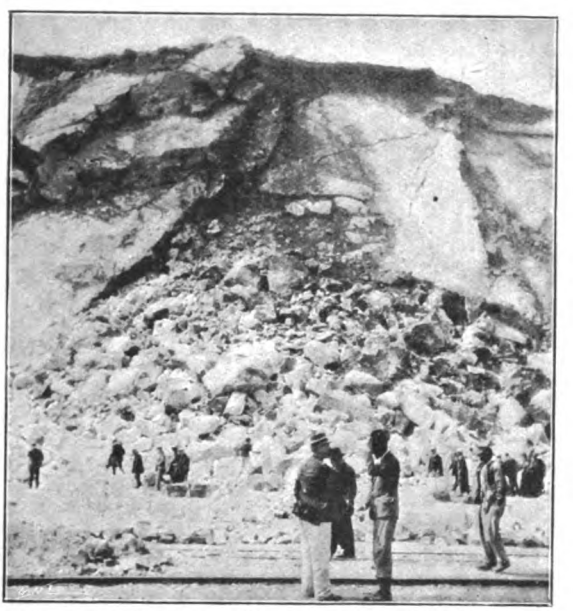
piping in any way, and thus render the charge useless.

The whole of the tunnels being filled up with cement masonry, which is allowed a day or two to harden, the mine is ready to be exploded. The finishing touch is to connect the fuses to the firing charge, which is done in the following manner. All the fuses are led into a pocket at the opening of the tunnel, and enveloped in gun-cotton, with a time-fuse inserted.

The thickness of the stone, charge, and resistance being calculated, all quarry plant is removed from the immediate vicinity, and although the zone of danger is extremely small, spectators are kept at a distance of about one hundred and fifty yards. The sound of a horn is heard, and everyone knows that the fatal moment is at hand. The time-fuse is lighted! The important officials join the group of spectators with steps that are calculated to show dignity, but are obviously a little too hurried. Anxious moments follow, when every ear is strained to catch the slightest sound, and every eye is fixed on the mass of rock soon to be rent in pieces. Soon a short sharp explosion relieves the tension on the ear, followed closely by a muffled bellow as the chambers explode; and the face of the rock becomes covered with little jets of light vapour escaping from every fissure; the actual rending of the rock is veiled from sight, as the muffled bellow develops into a mighty roar and the blocks of stone tumble one over the other in a huge cataract.

Nobody is allowed to approach the fall for some time after the explosion, as the gases generated are extremely dangerous to life. At a similar explosion which took place at the quarries in 1887 some workmen approached too soon to the scene, and seventeen fell down insensible, overcome by the gases: three of the number died some time after from the effects of their foolhardiness. The fall of stone estimated at this blast was 40,000 tons, and gave work for three months at this particular quarry.

The accompanying snap-shots were taken by a member of a party of Englishmen who were invited to witness the blast.



AFTER THE EXPLOSION—TAKEN FROM ALMOST THE SAME POSITION AS THE FIRST PHOTO.

A Garden Plot.

By W. W. Jacobs.

THE able-bodied men of the village were at work, the children were at school singing the multiplication-table lullaby, while the wives and mothers at home nursed the baby with one hand and did the housework with the other. At the end of the village an old man past work sat at a rough deal table under the creaking sign-board of the Cauliflower, gratefully drinking from a mug of ale supplied by a chance traveller who sat opposite him.

The shade of the elms was pleasant and the ale good. The traveller filled his pipe and, glancing at the dusty hedges and the white road baking in the sun, called for the mugs to be refilled, and pushed his pouch towards his companion. After which he paid a compliment to the appearance of the village.

"It ain't what it was when I was a boy," quavered the old man, filling his pipe with trembling fingers. "I mind when the grindstone was stuck just outside the winder o' the forge instead o' being one side as it now is; and as for the shop winder—it's twice the size it was when I was a young 'un."

He lit his pipe with the scientific accuracy of a smoker of sixty years' standing, and shook his head solemnly as he regarded his altered birthplace. Then his colour heightened and his dim eye flashed.

"It's the people about 'ere 'as changed more than the place 'as," he said, with sudden fierceness; "there's a set o' men about here nowadays as are no good to anybody; reg'lar raskels. And if you've the mind to listen I can tell you of one or two as couldn't be beat in London itself.

"There's Tom Adams for one. He went and started wot 'e called a Benevolent Club. Threepence a week each we paid agin sickness or accident, and Tom was secretary. Three weeks arter the club was started he caught a chill and was laid up for a month. He got back to work a week, and then 'e sprained something in 'is leg; and arter that was well 'is inside went wrong. We didn't think much of it at first, not understanding figures; but at the end o' six months the club hadn't got a farthing, and they was in Tom's debt one pound seventeen-and-six.

"IT'S THE PEOPLE ABOUT 'ERE 'AS CHANGED."

"He isn't the only one o' that sort in the place, either. There was Herbert Richardson. He went to town, and came back with the idea of a Goose Club for Christmas. We paid twopence a week into that for pretty near ten months, and then Herbert went back to town agin, and all we 'ear of 'im, through his sister, is that he's still there and doing well, and don't know when he'll be back.

"But the artfullest and worst man in this place—and that's saying a good deal, mind you—is Bob Pretty. Deep is no word for 'im. There's no way of being up to 'im. It's through 'im that we lost our Flower Show; and, if you'd like to 'ear the rights o' that, I don't suppose there's anybody in this place as knows as much about it as I do—barring Bob hisself that is, but 'e wouldn't tell it to you as plain as I can.

"We'd only 'ad the Flower Show one year, and little anybody thought that the next one was to be the last. The first year you might smell the place a mile off in the summer, and on the day of the show people came from a long way round and brought money to spend at the Cauliflower and other places.

"It was started just after we got our new parson, and Mrs. Pawlett, the parson's wife, 'is name being Pawlett, thought as she'd encourage men to love their 'omes and be better 'usbands by giving a prize every year for the best cottage garden. Three pounds was the prize, and a metal tea-pot with writing on it.

"As I said, we only 'ad it two years. The fust year the garden as got it was a picter, and Bill Chambers, 'im as won the prize, used to say as 'e was out o' pocket by it, taking 'is time and the money 'e spent on flowers. Not as we believed that, you understand, 'specially as Bill did 'is very best to get it the next year, too. 'E didn't get it, and though, p'r'aps, most of us was glad 'e didn't, we was all very surprised at the way it turned out in the end.

"The Flower Show was to be 'eld on the 5th o' July, just as a'most everything about here was at its best. On the 15th of June Bill Chambers's garden seemed to be leading, but Peter Smith and Joe Gubbins and Sam Jones and Henery Walker was almost as good, and it was understood that more than one of 'em had got a surprise which they'd produce at the last moment, too late for the others to copy. We used to sit up here of an evening at this Cauliflower public-house and put money on it. I put mine on Henery Walker, and the time I spent in 'is garden 'elping 'im is a sin and a shame to think of.

"Of course some of 'em used to make fun of it, and Bob Pretty was the worst of 'em all. He was always a lazy, good-for-nothing man, and 'is garden was a disgrace. He'd chuck down any rubbish in it: old bones, old tins, bits of an old bucket, anything to make it untidy. He used to larf at 'em awful about their gardens and about being took up by the parson's wife. Nobody ever see 'im do any work, real 'ard work, but the smell from 'is place at dinner-time was always nice, and I believe that he knew more about game than the parson hisself did.

"It was the day arter this one I'm speaking about, the 16th o' June, that the trouble all began, and it came about in a very eggstrordinary way. George English, a quiet man getting into years, who used when 'e was younger to foller the sea and whose only misfortin was that 'e was a brother-in-law o' Bob Pretty's, his sister marrying Bob while 'e was at sea and knowing nothing about it, 'ad a letter come from a mate of his who 'ad gone to Australia to live. He'd 'ad letters from Australia before, as we all knew from Miss Wicks at the post-office, but this one upset him altogether. He didn't seem like to know what to do about it.

"While he was wondering Bill Chambers passed. He always did pass George's 'ouse about that time in the evening, it being on 'is way 'ome, and he saw George standing at 'is gate with a letter in 'is 'and looking very puzzled.

"'Evenin', George,' ses Bill.

"'Evenin',' ses George.

"'Not bad news, I 'ope?' ses Bill, noticing 'is manner, and thinking it was strange.

"'NOT BAD NEWS, I 'OPE?' SES BILL."

"'No,' ses George. 'I've just 'ad a very eggstrordinary letter from Australia,' he ses, 'that's all.'

"Bill Chambers was always a very inquisitive sort o' man, and he stayed and talked to George until George, arter fust making him swear oaths that 'e wouldn't tell a soul, took 'im inside and showed 'im the letter.

"It was more like a story-book than a letter. George's mate, John Biggs by name, wrote to say that an uncle of his who had just died on 'is deathbed told him that thirty years ago he 'ad been in this very village staying at this 'ere very Cauliflower whose beer we're drinking now. In the night, when everybody was asleep, he got up and went quiet-like and buried a bag of five hundred and seventeen sovereigns and one half-sovereign in one of the cottage gardens till 'e could come for it agin. He didn't say 'ow he come by the money, and, when Bill spoke about that, George English said that, knowing the man, he was afraid 'e 'adn't come by it honest, but anyway his friend John Biggs wanted it, and, wot was more, 'ad asked 'im in the letter to get it for 'im.

"'And wot I'm to do about it, Bill,' he ses, 'I don't know. All the directions he gives is, that 'e thinks it was the tenth cottage on the right-'and side of the road, coming down from the Cauliflower. He thinks it's the tenth, but 'e's not quite sure. Do you think I'd better make it known and offer a reward of ten shillings, say, to anyone who finds it?'

"'No,' ses Bill, shaking 'is 'ead. 'I should hold on a bit if I was you, and think it over. I shouldn't tell another single soul, if I was you.'

"'I b'leeve you're right,' ses George. 'John Biggs would never forgive me if I lost that money for 'im. You'll remember about keeping it secret, Bill?'

"Bill swore he wouldn't tell a soul, and 'e went off 'ome and 'ad his supper, and then 'e walked up the road to the Cauliflower and back, and then up and back again, thinking over what George 'ad been telling 'im, and noticing, what 'e'd never taken the trouble to notice before, that 'is very house was the tenth one from the Cauliflower.

"Mrs. Chambers woke up at two o'clock next morning and told Bill to get up further, and then found 'e wasn't there. She was rather surprised at first, but she didn't think much of it and thought, what happened to be true, that 'e was busy in the garden, it being a light night. She turned over and went to sleep again, and at five when she woke up she could distinctly 'ear Bill working 'is 'ardest. Then she went to the winder and nearly dropped as she saw Bill in his shirt and trousers digging away like mad. A quarter of the garden was all dug up, and she shoved open the winder and screamed out to know what 'e was doing.

"Bill stood up straight and wiped 'is face with his shirt-sleeve and started digging again, and then his wife just put something on and rushed downstairs as fast as she could go.

"'What on earth are you a-doing of, Bill?' she screams.

"'Go indoors,' ses Bill, still digging.

"'Have you gone mad?' she ses, half-crying.

"Bill just stopped to throw a lump of mould at her, and then went on digging till Henery Walker, who also thought 'e 'ad gone mad, and didn't want to stop 'im too soon, put 'is 'ead over the 'edge and asked 'im the same thing.

"'Ask no questions and you'll 'ear no lies, and keep your ugly face your own side of the 'edge,' ses Bill. 'Take it indoors and frighten the children with,' he ses. 'I don't want it staring at me.'

"Henery walked off offended, and Bill went on with his digging. He wouldn't go to work, and 'e 'ad his breakfast in the garden, and his wife spent all the morning in the front answering the neighbours' questions and begging of 'em to go in and say something to Bill. One of 'em did go, and came back a'most directly and stood there for hours telling diff'rent people wot Bill 'ad said to *'er*, and asking whether 'e couldn't be locked up for it.

"By tea-time Bill was dead-beat and that stiff he could 'ardly raise 'is bread and butter to his mouth. Several o' the chaps looked in in the evening, but all they could get out of 'im was, that it was a new way o' cultivating 'is garden 'e 'ad just 'eard of, and that those who lived the longest would see the most. By night-time 'e'd nearly finished the job, and 'is garden was just ruined.

"Afore people 'ad done talking about Bill, I'm blest if Peter Smith didn't go and cultivate 'is garden in exactly the same way. The parson and 'is wife was away on their 'oliday, and nobody could say a word. The curate who 'ad come over to take 'is place for a time, and who took the names of people for the Flower Show, did point out to 'im that he was spoiling 'is chances, but Peter

was so rude to 'im that he didn't stay long enough to say much.

"When Joe Gubbins started digging up 'is garden people began to think they were all bewitched, and I went round to see Henery Walker to tell 'im wot a fine chance 'e'd got, and to remind 'im that I'd put another ninepence on 'im the night before. All 'e said was, 'More fool you,' and went on digging a 'ole in his garden big enough to put a 'ouse in.

"In a fortnight's time there wasn't a garden worth looking at in the place, and it was quite clear there'd be no Flower Show that year, and of all the silly, bad-tempered men in the place them as 'ad dug up their pretty gardens was the wust.

"It was just a few days before the day fixed for the Flower Show, and I was walking up the road when I see Joe and Henery Walker and one or two more leaning over Bob Pretty's fence and talking to 'im. I stopped, too, to see what they were looking at, and found they was watching Bob's two boys a-weeding of 'is garden. It was a disgraceful, untidy sort of place, as I said before, with a few marigolds and nasturtiums, and sich-like put in anywhere, and Bill was walking up and down smoking of 'is pipe and watching 'is wife hoe atween the plants and cut off dead marigold blooms.

"'That's a pretty garden you've got there, Bob,' ses Joe, grinning.

"'I've seen wuss,' ses Bob.

"'Going in for the Flower Show, Bob?' ses Henery, with a wink at us.

"'O' course I am,' ses Bob, 'olding 'is 'ead up; 'my marigolds ought to pull me through,' he ses.

"Henery wouldn't believe it at first, but when he saw Bob show 'is missus 'ow to pat the path down with the back o' the spade and hold the nails for 'er while she nailed a climbing nasturtium to the fence, he went off and fetched Bill Chambers and one or two others, and they all leaned over the fence breathing their 'ardest and a-saying of all the nasty things to Bob they could think of.

"'It's the best-kep' garden in the place,' ses Bob. 'I ain't afraid o' your new way o' cultivating flowers, Bill Chambers. Old-fashioned ways suit me best; I learnt 'ow to grow flowers from my father.'

"'You ain't 'ad the cheek to give your name in, Bob?' ses Sam Jones, staring.

"Bob didn't answer 'im. 'Pick those bits o' grass out o' the path, old gal,' he ses to 'is wife; 'they look untidy, and untidiness I can't abear.'

"He walked up and down smoking 'is pipe and pretending not to notice Henery Walker wot 'ad moved farther along the fence, and was staring at some drabble-tailed-looking geraniums as if 'e'd seen 'em afore but wasn't quite sure where.

"'Admiring my geraniums, Henery?' ses Bob, at last.

"'Where'd you get 'em?' ses Henery, 'ardly able to speak.

"'My florist's,' ses Bob, in a off-hand manner.

"'Your *wot?*' asks Henery.

"'My florist,' ses Bob.

"'And who might 'e be when 'e's at home?' asked Henery.

"''Tain't so likely I'm going to tell you

"I THOUGHT YOU WAS DIGGING FOR GRAVEL THIS YEAR."

that,' ses Bob. 'Be reasonable, Henery, and ask yourself whether it's likely I should tell you 'is name. Why, I've never seen sich fine geraniums afore. I've been nursing 'em inside all the summer, and just planted 'em out.'

"'About two days arter I threw mine over my back fence,' ses Henery Walker, speaking very slowly.

"'Ho,' ses Bob, surprised. 'I didn't know you 'ad any geraniums, Henery. I thought you was digging for gravel this year.'

"Henery didn't answer 'im. Not because 'e didn't want to, mind you, but because he couldn't.

"'That one,' ses Bob, pointing at a broken geranium with the stem of 'is pipe, 'is a "Dook o' Wellington," and that white one there is wot I'm going to call "Pretty's Pride." That fine marigold over there, wot looks like a sunflower, is called "Golden Dreams."'

"'Come along, Henery,' ses Bill Chambers, bursting, 'come and get something to take the taste out of your mouth.'

"'I'm sorry I can't offer you a flower for your button-'ole,' ses Bob, perlitely, 'but it's getting so near the Flower Show now I can't afford it. If you chaps only knew wot pleasure was to be 'ad sitting among your innercent flowers, you wouldn't want to go to the public-house so often.'

"He shook 'is 'ead at 'em, and telling his wife to give the 'Dook o' Wellington' a mug of water, sat down in the chair agin and wiped the sweat off 'is brow.

"Bill Chambers did a bit o' thinking as they walked up the road, and by-and-by 'e turns to Joe Gubbins and 'e ses:—

"'Seen anything o' George English lately, Joe?'

"'*Yes*,' ses Joe.

"'Seems to me we all 'ave,' ses Sam Jones.

"None of 'em liked to say wot was in their minds, 'aving all seen George English and swore pretty strong not to tell his secret, and none of 'em liking to own up that they'd been digging up their gardens to get money as 'e'd told 'em about. But presently Bill Chambers ses:—

"'Without telling no secrets or breaking no promises, Joe, supposing a certain 'ouse was mentioned in a certain letter from forrin parts, wot 'ouse was it?'

"'Supposing it was so,' ses Joe, careful too; 'the second 'ouse counting from the Cauliflower.'

"'The ninth 'ouse, you mean,' ses Henery Walker, sharply.

"'Second 'ouse in Mill Lane, you mean, ses Sam Jones, wot lived there.

"Then they all see 'ow they'd been done, and that they wasn't, in a manner o' speaking, referring to the same letter. They came up and sat 'ere where we're sitting now, all dazed-like. It wasn't only the chance o' losing the prize that upset 'em, but they'd wasted their time and ruined their gardens and got called mad by the other folks. Henery Walker's state o' mind was dreadful for to see, and he kep' thinking of 'orrible things to say to George English and then being afraid they wasn't strong enough.

"While they was talking who should come along but George English hisself! He came right up to the table, and they all sat back on the bench and stared at 'im fierce, and Henery Walker crinkled 'is nose at him.

"'Evening,' he ses, but none of 'em answered 'im; they all looked at Henery to see wot 'e was going to say.

"'Wot's up?' ses George, in surprise.

"'*Gardens*,' ses Henery.

"'So I've 'eard, ses George.

"He shook 'is 'ead and looked at them sorrowful and severe at the same time.

"'So I 'eard, and I couldn't believe my ears till I went and looked for myself,' he ses, 'and wot I want to say is this: you know wot I'm referring to. If any man 'as found wot don't belong to him 'e knows who to give it to. It ain't wot I should 'ave expected of men wot's lived in the same place as *me* for years. Talk about honesty,' 'e ses, shaking 'is 'ead agin, 'I should like to see a little of it.'

"Peter Smith opened his mouth to speak, and 'ardly knowing wot 'e was doing took a pull at 'is beer at the same time, and if Sam Jones 'adn't been by to thump 'im on the back I b'lieve he'd ha' died there and then.

"'Mark my words,' ses George English, speaking very slow and solemn, 'there'll be no blessing on it. Whoever's made 'is fortune by getting up and digging 'is garden over won't get no real benefit from it. He may wear a black coat and new trousers on Sunday, but 'e won't be 'appy. I'll go and get my little taste o' beer somewhere else,' 'e ses. 'I can't breathe here.'

"He walked off before anyone could say a word; Bill Chambers dropped 'is pipe and smashed it, Henery Walker sat staring after 'im with 'is mouth wide open, and Sam Jones, who was always one to take advantage, drank 'is own beer under the firm belief that it was Joe's.

"'I shall take care that Mrs. Pawlett 'ears 'o this,' ses Henery, at last.

"'And be asked wot you dug your garden up for,' ses Joe, 'and 'ave to explain that you broke your promise to George. Why, she'd talk at us for years and years.'

"'And parson 'ud preach a sermon about it,' ses Sam; 'where's your sense, Henery?'

"'We should be the larfing-stock for miles round,' ses Bill Chambers. 'If anybody want's to know, I dug my garden up to enrich the soil for next year, and also to give some other chap a chance of the prize.'

"Peter Smith 'as always been a unfortunit man; he's got the name for it. He was just 'aving another drink as Bill said that, and this time we all thought e'd gorn. He did hisself.

"Mrs. Pawlett and the parson came 'ome next day, an' 'er voice got that squeaky with surprise it was painful to listen to her. All the chaps stuck to the tale that they'd dug their garden up to give the others a chance, and Henery Walker, 'e went further and said it was owing to a sermon on unselfishness wot the curate 'ad preached three weeks afore. He 'ad a nice little red-covered 'im-book the next day with 'From a friend' wrote in it.

"All things considered, Mrs. Pawlett was for doing away with the Flower Show that year and giving two prizes next year instead, but one or two other chaps, encouraged by Bob's example, 'ad given in their names too, and they said it wouldn't be fair to their wives. All the gardens but one was worse than Bob's, they not having started till later than wot 'e did, and not being able to get their geraniums from 'is florist. The only better garden was Ralph Thomson's, who lived next door to 'im, but two nights afore the Flower Show 'is pig got walking in its sleep. Ralph said it was a mystery to 'im 'ow the pig could ha' got out; it must ha' put its foot through a hole too small for it, and turned the button of its door, and then climbed over a four-foot fence. He told Bob 'e wished the pig could speak, but Bob said that that was sinful and un-Christian of 'im, and that most likely if it could, it would only call i'm a lot o' bad names, and ask 'im why he didn't feed it properly.

"There was quite a crowd on Flower Show day following the judges. First of all, to Bill Chambers's astonishment and surprise, they went to 'is place and stood on the 'eaps in 'is garden, judging 'em while Bill peeped at 'em through the kitchen winder 'arf-crazy. They went to every garden in the place, until one of the young ladies got tired of it, and asked Mrs. Pawlett whether they was there to judge cottage gardens or earthquakes.

"Everybody 'eld their breaths that even-

"HE TOLD BOB 'E WISHED THE PIG COULD SPEAK."

ing in the school-room when Mrs. Pawlett got up on the platform and took a slip of paper from one of the judges. She stood a moment waiting for silence, and then 'eld up her 'and to stop what she thought was clapping at the back, but which was two or three wimmen who 'ad 'ad to take their crying babies out trying to quiet 'em in the porch. Then Mrs. Pawlett put 'er glasses on her nose and just read out, short and sweet, that the prize of three sovereigns and a metal teapot for the best-kept cottage garden 'ad been won by Mr. Robert Pretty.

"One or two people patted Bob on the back as 'e walked up the middle to take the prize; then one or two more did, and Bill

Chambers's pat was the 'eartiest of 'em all. Bob stopped and spoke to 'im about it.

"You would 'ardly think that Bob 'ud have the cheek to stand up there and make a speech, but 'e did. He said it gave 'im great pleasure to take the teapot and the money, and the more pleasure because 'e felt that 'e had earned 'em. He said that if 'e told 'em all 'e'd done to make sure o' the prize, they'd be surprised. He said that 'e'd been like Ralph Thomson's pig, up early and late.

"He stood up there talking as though 'e was never going to leave off, and said that 'e hoped as 'is example would be of benefit to 'is neighbours. Some of 'em seemed to think that digging was everything, but 'e could say with pride that 'e 'adn't put a spade to 'is garden for three years until a week ago, and then not much.

"He finished 'is remarks by saying that 'e was going to give a tea-party up at the Cauliflower to christen the teapot, where 'e'd be pleased to welcome all friends. Quite a crowd got up and followed 'im out then, instead o' waiting for the dissolving views, and came back 'arf an hour arterwards, saying that until they'd got as far as the Cauliflower they'd no idea as Bob was so pertikler who 'e mixed with.

"That was the last Flower Show we ever 'ad in Claybury, Mrs. Pawlett and the judges meeting the tea-party coming 'ome, and 'aving to get over a gate into a field to let it pass. What with that, and Mrs. Pawlett tumbling over something further up the road, which turned out to be the teapot, smelling strong of beer, the Flower Show was given up, and the parson preached three Sundays running on the sin of beer-drinking to children who'd never 'ad any and wimmen who couldn't get it."

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IE SAID IT GAVE 'IM GREAT PLEASURE TO TAKE THE TEAPOT."

Mysterious Box Tricks.

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY JAMES SCOTT.

I SHALL assume that the larger number of readers are familiar with the style of box tricks; but for the information of those who may not have seen such a performance it may be briefly stated that a conjurer, after permitting a large box or case to be minutely examined by invited members of the audience, huddles himself within the receptacle, which is subsequently locked and tied up securely with rope. In many instances it is also placed bodily in a sack, which is sealed and otherwise rendered apparently secure. After certain preliminaries have been indulged in the whole paraphernalia is re-opened, when to the onlookers' surprise the box is seen to be entirely empty, the previous occupant having made his exit in a seemingly miraculous manner from his well-bound, self-chosen prison, to reappear later on with perfect freedom before his startled patrons.

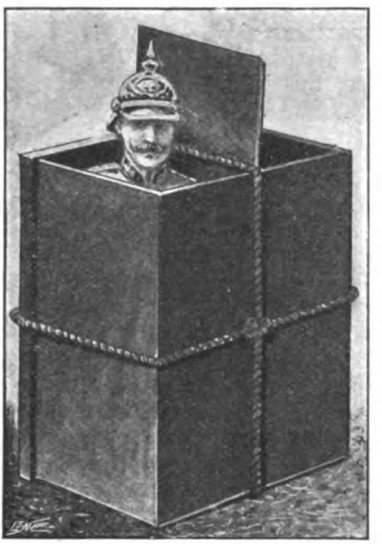


FIG. 1.—A COMMON DEVICE.

The charm of these box tricks is their naïve simplicity of action. The audience might agitate their brains till Doomsday in seeking an elucidation of the mystery before them, yet really nothing more potent than the unfastening of secret springs, and the loosing and folding of a few flaps, has enabled the magician to appear possessed of infernal capabilities.

The rope with which the box may be encircled only serves to strengthen the appearance of wonder, and adds materially to the effect produced. The spectator mentally jumps to the conclusion that to leave the box the inmate must force or open some portion of it *outwardly*. He loses sight of the possibility of removing sliding panels and inwardly-acting flaps.

The commonest trick is, perhaps, that displayed in Fig. 1. The box is roped across as shown with a man concealed within it, and is then erected "on end." Escape at this point is made by the ridiculously simple means of opening one end as illustrated. It will be noted that the rope forms no bar whatever to this mechanical movement. Of course, in actual operation, the working extremity of the contrivance is placed directly over a trap-door in the stage. My reason for inverting it will naturally be obvious to the reader. When the box is afterwards sealed up in a sack the man has already disappeared from it.

The exhibition of this trick may be painfully spoilt by astutely disposing of the rope so that it occupies similar positions to those indicated in the other drawings. But then it is the performer's express purpose so to arrange matters that the box is secured precisely in conformance with his desires.

A similarly deceptive and equally clever idea is shown in Fig. 2. In one important feature, however, it far surpasses that which has just been disposed of. It may be tied up in any way; yet will not fail to allow the occupant to make good his escape. In this instance the conjurer merely folds the end as a double-flap inwardly, when, as will be comprehended, the rope proves to be no obstacle

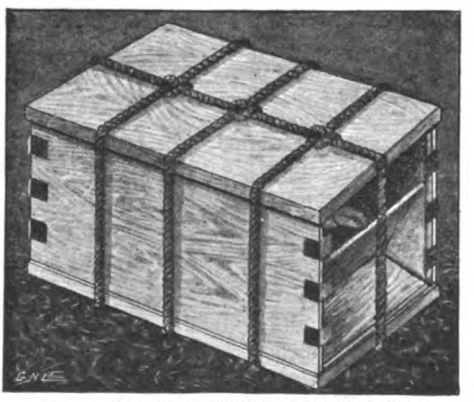


FIG. 2.—BOX WITH DOUBLE-FOLDING FLAP END.

whatever. There, again, the opening would be in direct communication with a trap-door. The flaps would regain their normal attitude as soon as the operator had forced his way out between the ropes. A very essential part of the making of this cunning device is so to paint the exterior to resemble the grain of wood as to conceal the division of the end—*i.e.*, the joining of the two flaps. But clever workmen can accomplish marvels in this direction.

A more meritorious invention is given in Fig. 3. There, again, the box may be strongly bound, within certain reasonable limits, of course, after the performer has secreted himself. In displaying this device to the audience, and more particularly to

FIG. 3.—A VERY EFFECTIVE AND SIMPLE TRICK.

those who mount the stage from among the main body of the people, the operator is anxious that a very searching examination shall be made to convince the inspectors that it is a "hard, sound, well-made job"—as the cabinet-makers say of their furniture. When he is about to shut the lid down, however, he just slides to one side the teeth which are supposed to catch into the lock, and which are attached to the under-side of the lid. He shuts this lid down once with a bang before imprisoning himself, to emphasize his eulogy on its impregnability. This movement releases *the whole front of the box*, which, by means of springs, quickly lowers itself as shown in Fig. 4 until it occupies a position in contact with and right over the genuine bottom. Naturally, the loud noise made by the shutting of the lid deadens any sound produced by the front falling against the bottom. When he subsequently steps

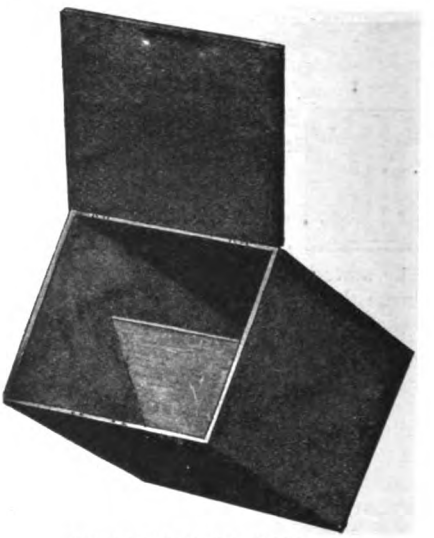


FIG. 4.—EXPLANATION OF FIG. 3.

inside, to be bound and locked in by a *confederate*, all that he is called upon to do is to roll up the dummy front, as you would roll up a blind. This dummy front is nothing more than a square of American cloth, prepared to conform exactly in appearance with the other sides of the box. It will be understood that the hinged board which had previously been erect behind the dummy front had so stiffened the latter that tapping and inspection would not reveal its composition. When a final view of the empty box is being undertaken all parts have resumed their normal positions; and, of course, again defy detection.

Somewhat similar in character to the preceding devices, yet possessing individual merits of great difference from them, is box Fig. 5, which is made to bear a resemblance to a packing-case. The captive, in this instance, opens two flaps inwardly, as in

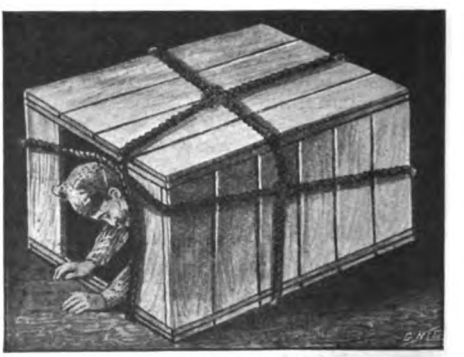


FIG. 5.—THE PACKING-CASE TRICK.

FIG. 6.—HOW FIG. 5 TRICK IS EFFECTED.

Fig. 6, and this movement permits him to slide, in opposite directions, the two upright central staves, when an opening sufficiently large to permit of his egress is obtained. A slight survey of the drawings will reveal these particulars.

It may be a relief for the reader to have his attention directed to receptacles of a more novel formation. That exhibited in Figs. 7 and 8, for example, is delightfully naïve and mysterious. The magician urges upon his

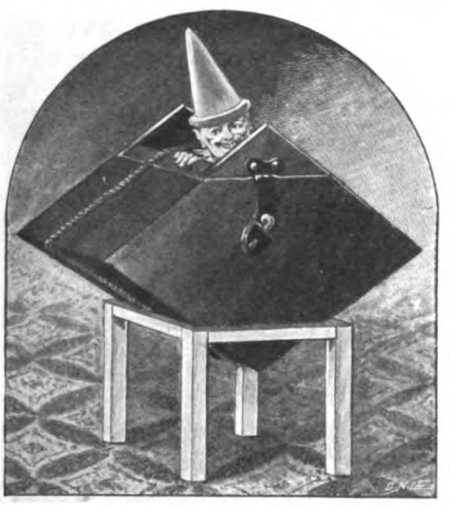


FIG. 7.—A TRICK IN WHICH TRAP-DOORS ARE DISPENSED WITH.

listeners the very obvious and well-impressed fact that, being poised upon a trestle, no escape is afforded the prisoner by means of stage trap-doors. This isolation of the contrivance lends a very significant importance to the experiment.

The triangular lid is opened; all parts are well tested. Then, with much ostentatious ceremony, the entertainer climbs aloft and drops with alacrity into the exposed cavity. The triangular lid is afterwards fastened into position with immense padlocks, and, in addition, any desired parts are roped. Apparently to render the exhibition more startling, yet really for the absolutely necessary concealment of certain movements of the performer, the box is surrounded by a four-fold curtained screen, as displayed in Fig. 9. You will observe that under these conditions the audience would have the

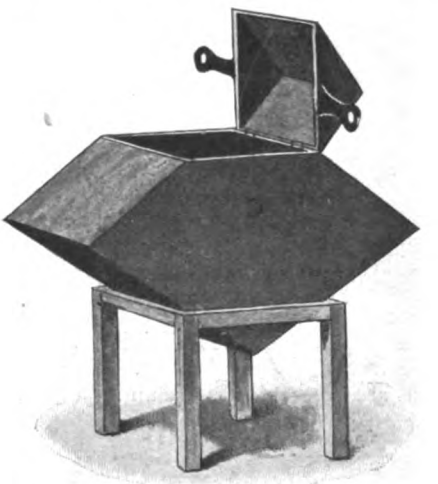


FIG. 8.—THE BOX SHOWN IN ACTION IN FIG. 7.

privilege of gaining a clear view entirely beneath the box and its support, completely to the back of the stage. Whence, then, does the artful fellow escape? Well, all he does is to release the two sloping sides of the lid, pull them down behind the upper sides of the box, then creep out and draw aside a small portion of the hinder-

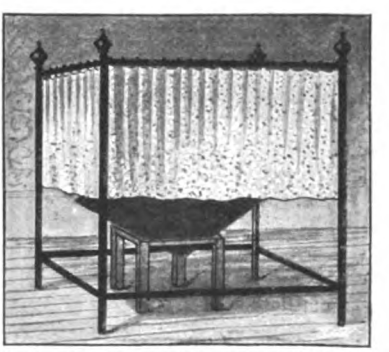


FIG. 9.—THE BOX SURROUNDED BY THE CURTAIN.

most curtain, subsequently sliding down a plank which a confederate has, undetected, placed in the required position. A dummy

picture in the drop-scene behind has previously been removed, and a plank pushed up from the back of the scene (Fig. 10).

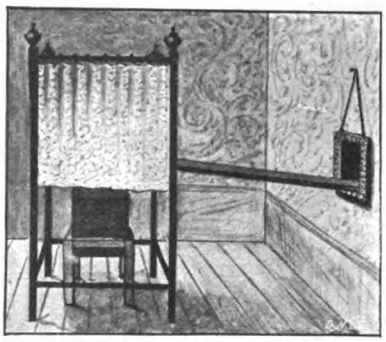


FIG. 10.—HOW THE PERFORMER ESCAPES.

In this way the magician is enabled to slip right down out of sight; and when the screen is removed and the box (which, by the assistance of springs, has resumed its ordinary massive appearance) is opened the astonishment of the onlookers is genuine.

The next trick with which I shall here deal has reference to the box shown in Fig. 11. You will readily observe that the lid is a sliding one. Anyone examining the interior of the casket would find that it was apparently strengthened by two angle-irons crossing the bottom and bending upwards across the sides, thus dividing the receptacle into three equal parts. These angle-irons are destined to serve an important purpose in the execution of the deception. I can best render my explanation understandable by following the series of actions which ensue after the conjurer has laid himself within the box. It should be said that the contrivance is at this juncture so placed that the central portion (that area which is situated *between* the angle-irons) is directly over a trap-door. What happens is this: As the lid slides into place, and when its inner end touches the angle-iron nearest to the performer's feet, certain mechanism is released which allows the lid to lift bodily the central bottom portion of the box and the two angle-irons, *and carry them on to the feet end.* Meanwhile, the captive has to dexterously arch his body and legs to permit of these movements. Thus, by the time the lid is fixed properly there exists a large opening formed in the bottom of the box, through which the conjurer wriggles. After dropping down through the trap-door he is enabled to replace the central division and angle-irons quickly, without in any way removing the lid.

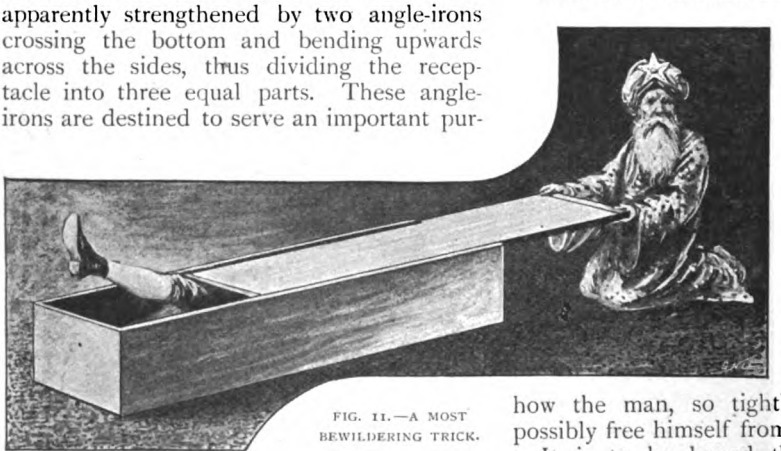


FIG. 11.—A MOST BEWILDERING TRICK.

Meantime an assistant has been fastening a length of cord round and round the sides and ends of the box. Upon receiving a prearranged signal, he then elevates the box on to one end and slips it into a sack. It is, of course, empty, but this pregnant fact is unknown to the audience, who naturally marvel how the man, so tightly wedged in, can possibly free himself from his prison.

It is to be hoped that this revelation will not detract from the real appreciation which the ingenuity of these contrivances deserves.

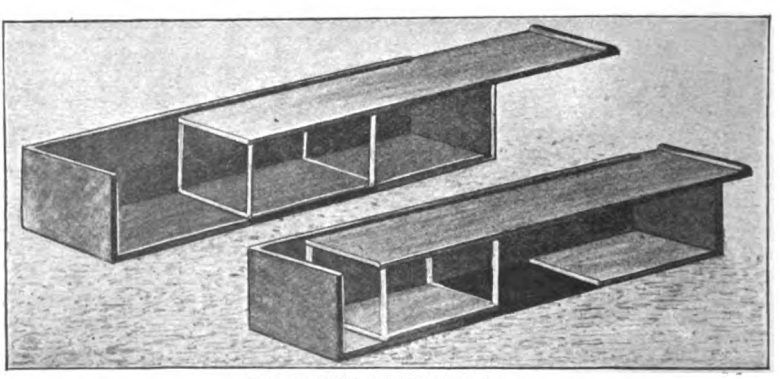


FIG. 12.—EXPLANATION OF FIG. 11.

*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

A NOVEL DARK-ROOM.

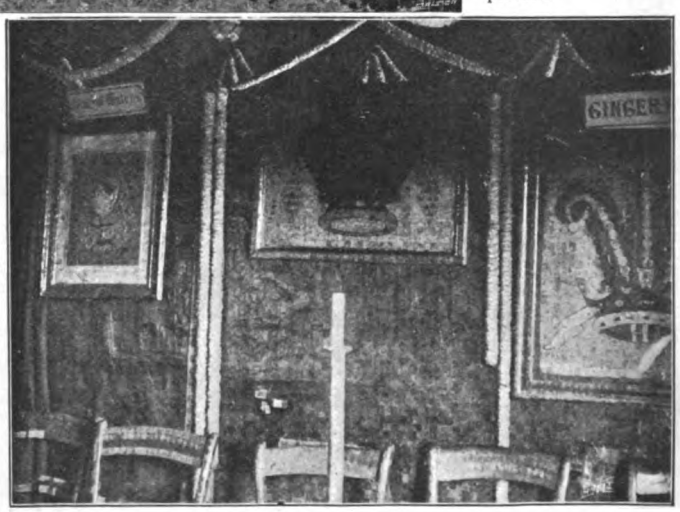
Mr. F. Leeming, of 227, Fourteenth Street, Milwaukee, Wis., is a man of great resource. He happened to be taking photographs, together with a friend, when one of the plates got stuck in the camera, and no amount of coaxing would induce it to budge. Spying the hollow trunk of a tree close by, our ingenious photographer conceived the brilliant idea of using Nature's handiwork as a dark room. How this was done is shown in the picture. "Not a single plate was fogged or light-struck," adds our informant, and he may record the fact with pride.

WOMEN AS BEASTS OF BURDEN.

This startling photograph was taken at the Dukhobers Settlement, near the Swan River, Manitoba, on the Canadian Pacific Railroad. It is pleasing to record that the Government put a stop to this practice as soon as it became known, and we may, therefore, safely hope that fourteen women hitched to a plough will be henceforth only a thing of the memory and nothing more.

A ROOM AS A STAMP-ALBUM.

The next photo. shows the interior of a room in an inn which stands on the road between Bognor and Chichester. The room is entirely papered with stamps of all countries; the portrait of the Queen, the crown, and the Prince of Wales's feathers being designed and carried out with great skill and effect. Festoons of stamps hang from the ceiling and walls, and the whole scene is one which may be said to remain permanently "stamped" upon the memory of the visitor. Miss Eleanor Murray, of 87, Lodge Road, The Avenue, Southampton, has sent in this picture.



* Copyright, 1900, by Geo. Newnes, Limited.

A FRIENDLY ROBIN.

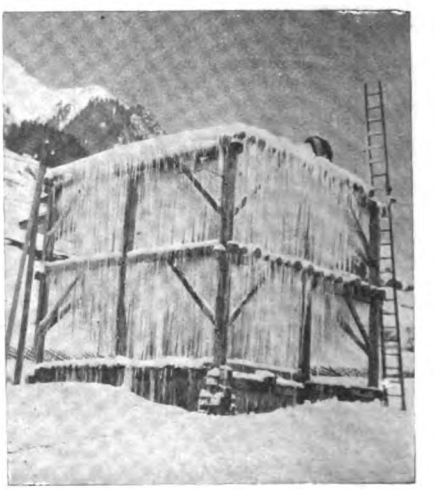
Early last year a robin nested in the garden of Mr. Leonard Dewey, of "Carisbrooke," Finsbury Park, N., and he sends some interesting particulars describing the bird's familiarity as evidenced in the pretty snap-shot reproduced here. Mr. Dewey says: "We soon discovered that if we placed some meal-worms on a plate near the nest the cock bird would come down and take the worms to his family. After weeks of patient effort we tamed him to such a degree that he would feed from our hands, and at last grew so familiar as to perch on my shoulder whenever I went into the garden. This somewhat unique snap-shot depicts him at an open-air tea party, where he hopped on the handle of the tea-pot with a meal-worm in his beak."

A NEW METHOD OF MAKING ICE.

A novel way of procuring ice for summer use has been introduced this winter in Switzerland. The apparatus consists of a wooden scaffolding about 30ft. high, with bars and cross-beams. Water is taken to the top in a pipe ending in a spray, which revolves with the force of water. Icicles form during the night from every beam, giving the curious effect shown in the photograph. After hard frost during one or two nights the icicles are cut down with a hatchet and stored for the summer, and the same process is begun over again. Miss Charlotte Heath, of Château d'Oex, Switzerland, sends this photo.

GIANTS OF THE FOREST.

This photograph, which was taken by Mr. Adam Dove, of New York, will serve to convey a striking idea of the size of the giant sequoia trees, of which but two living species are to be found on earth, and those in California. The photograph shows the "Fallen Monarch" of the Mariposa Grove, with the regular Yosemite Valley stage-coach, occupied by seventeen people and drawn by six horses, all on the top of the monster trunk, which is 28ft. in diameter. This tree has lain so long that no living man knows when it fell, and the picture was made for display at the Paris Exhibition. There are several hundred of these trees still standing, many of them being over 300ft. in height. One, "The Father of the Forest," in Calaveras Grove, now fallen, was 435ft. in height and 110ft. in circumference. The age of these trees is variously estimated at from 1,500 to 6,000 years. Some of the groves, notably Mariposa, are guarded by the United States army. Mr. John L. Von Blow, of Los Angeles, Cal., is responsible for this interesting contribution.

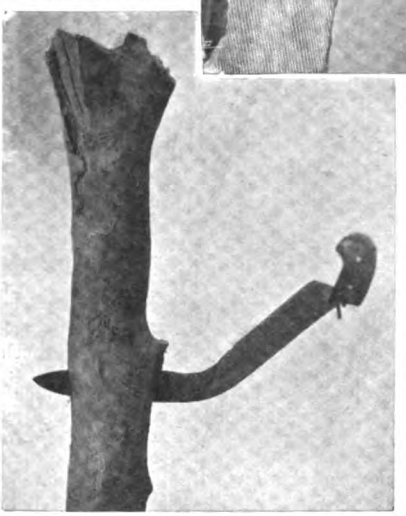


A VERY BIG FLYING-FISH.

The flying-fish shown here is supposed to be the biggest of its kind yet caught. Captain W. H. Smythe, of the ss. *Umtata*, who has run backwards and forwards from the old country to Africa for over twenty years, declares it to be the largest specimen he ever saw. Its length is 22½in., from tip to tip of wing 24½in., and it weighed 3½lb. Mr. J. A. Crispin sends this all the way from Durban.

WHAT THREE CARTLOADS OF GUNPOWDER DID.

"A terrible explosion took place some time ago in a suburb of San Salvador, capital of the small Republic of Salvador, in Central America. Three carts drawn by oxen, loaded with gunpowder, were heavily making their way, under the escort of a few soldiers, to the powder magazine situated a short distance out of town. Suddenly a frightful report was heard, shaking the whole town as does one of our familiar earthquakes. The gunpowder had blown up, throwing down everything around it. Men and animals were flung away, black, disfigured, quartered. It is on the spot of the accident that I discovered, a few moments after it took place, a soldier's sword (*machete*), embedded point first in the trunk of a *guayabo*, considered one of the hardest timbers in this country. The tree was about 60ft. away from the exact place of the explosion. The weapon, no doubt, had been snatched away and so violently darted, that it pierced through the trunk of the *guayabo*, the blade being bent as shown in the photograph." C. F. Alberti, of San Salvador, favours us with this extraordinary contribution. Photo. by Ymery Hermanos.

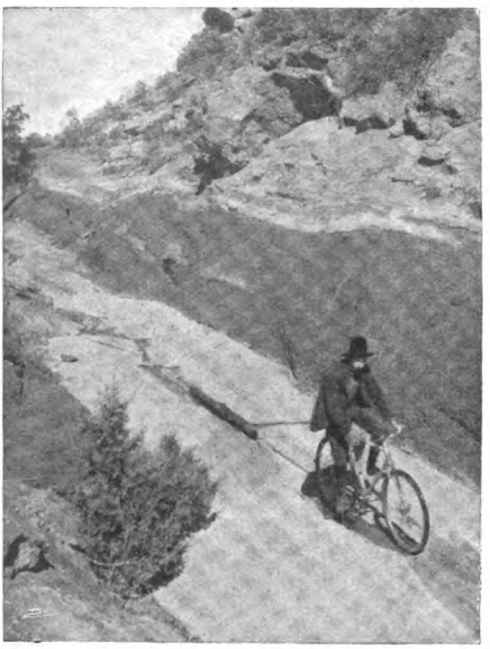


TWENTY-EIGHT PORTRAITS AT A TIME!

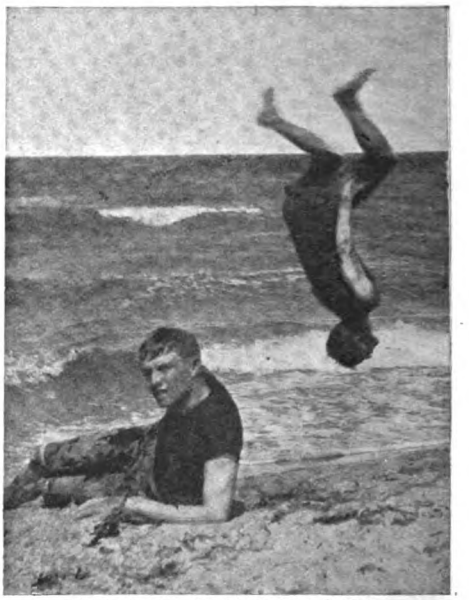
Mr. L. E. Wallis, of Grass Valley, Nevada Co., Cal., in sending this photograph, says: "I send you a photograph, or rather a series of photographs, taken here with a special multiplying plate-holder, by which the twenty-eight photos. are taken separately on one plate and printed off twenty-eight at a time. The time taken in securing the different positions did not exceed five minutes. I thought it would be interesting for your photo. curiosities."

CYCLISTS, PLEASE NOTE!

The danger in descending mountains on bicycles, so far as speed is concerned, seems to have been solved by the cyclist in the picture, who, it will be observed, employs a tree-drag to hold his wheel back,

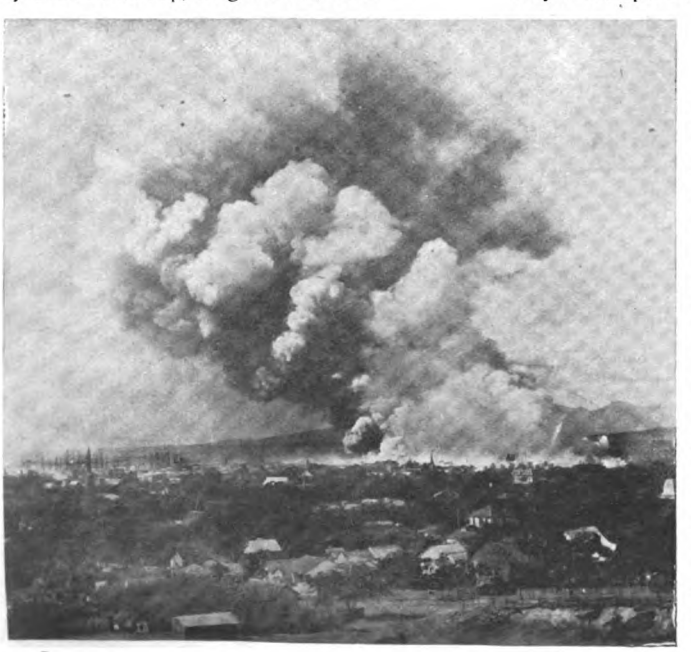


which is the ordinary custom among cyclists in that part of the world. The picture was taken on the Siskiyou Mountain, on the California-Oregon line, by C. J. Armstrong, of Newport, Ky., and is sent to us by Orrin E. Dunlap, Niagara Falls, N.Y.



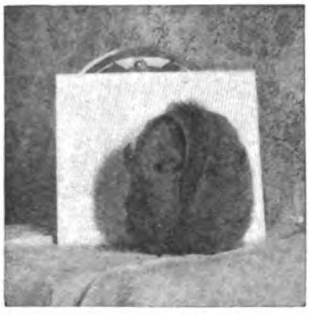
M.D. AND AMATEUR ACROBAT.

This amusing snap-shot was sent by Mr. Jesse P. Neville, of the Portsmouth Camera Club, Portsmouth, Va., who is much interested in our curiosities. He says in his letter: "Being an amateur photographer nothing gives me more pleasure than your monthly curiosities, so I send you herewith a snap-shot (taken at Ocean View, Virginia) of a young man turning a somersault in the air. Added interest is lent to the picture in view of the fact that the young man in the air, Dr. Geo. Peed, while very young (twenty-two) was appointed assistant-surgeon, with rank of captain, in the Fourth Regiment Virginia Volunteers, for duty in the Spanish-American War."



FIGHTING THE DREADED PLAGUE.

Miss A. K. Adair writes from Honolulu as follows: "The bubonic plague broke out in Honolulu, the principal city of the Hawaiian Islands, on the 7th of December, 1899. There has been great alarm throughout the entire group, and the strictest quarantine has been observed. The efforts of the Government and citizens to stamp out this death-dealing disease, which is becoming so prevalent throughout many sections of the entire world, have been most heroic, resulting in the burning of Chinatown, a portion of the city comprising about a third of the population, extending over an area of twenty-six acres. Detention camps are provided where the several thousand Asiatics and Japanese are being taken care of until suitable quarters can be erected. I send you a photograph of the burning district taken from the heights at the back of the city."

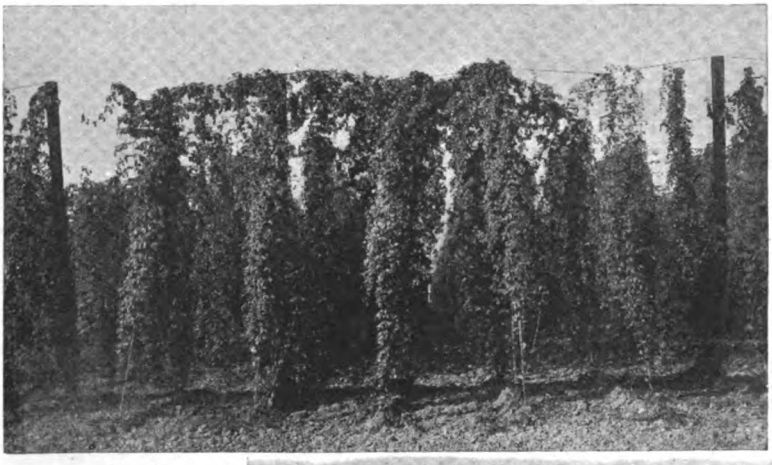


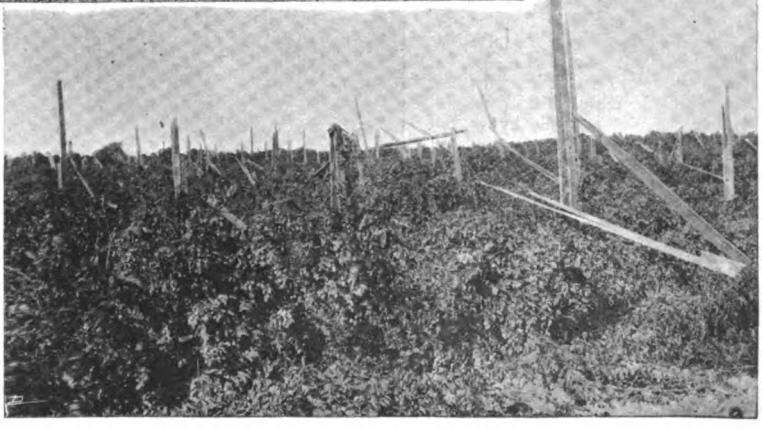
HOW THE GOPHER SLEEPS.

This picture does not illustrate a ball of string, nor is it an orange; it is a gopher (an animal which sleeps like a dormouse), and, what is more, a gopher fast asleep and nearly frozen hard. Note the two closed eyes, the foot each side of the head, and the tail folded up over the forehead. The gopher, when found by Mr. McColloch, on his farm, near Killarney, Manitoba, was hard, cold, and, to all appearances, frozen. That is how the gopher hibernates. The exposure was made by the Rev. H. Beacham, of Killarney, Manitoba, and sent in by Miss A. E. Bates, of that town.

A FALL IN HOPS.

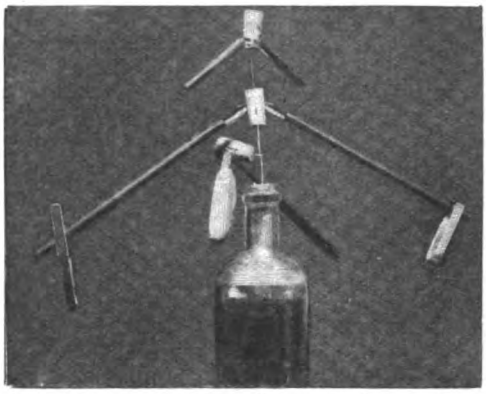
Mr. Arthur J. Platt, of Pleasanton, Alameda Co., Cal., sends the next two photos. and explains their meaning as follows: "Photo. No. 1 represents a trellis hopyard in full bearing near Pleasanton, California, and No. 2 is the same subject taken a few minutes later. The difference is not the result of a cyclone, as one would be led to imagine, but is due simply to a collapse by reason of the immense weight of the hop vines on the wires and poles. If one wire or pole happens to break, then double the strain is thrown on the next row, which gives way under the increased weight, and so on until the whole yard goes entirely down like a house of cards. In this instance the entire crop was saved by raising the wires from the ground some ten feet on temporary crutches, thus enabling the crop to be harvested."





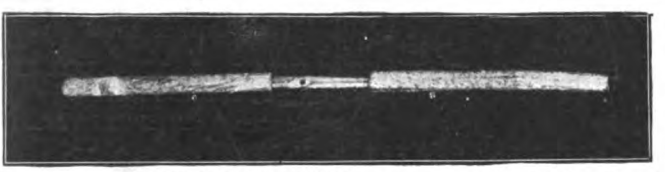
A BALANCING FEAT.

The photo. shown below is that of a balancing feat. A bottle with a cork in it has a needle placed in it in a vertical position, point outwards. The first section of balancing consists of a pin placed horizontally on the point of this needle, and kept in position by being pierced into a cork, into which two knives are introduced so as to preserve the balance. The second section consists of a cork with a needle sticking, point outwards, at each end, into which two pens are stuck, having weights placed at each end. The pens are adjusted so as to keep the needles vertical; this is then placed on the horizontal pin. Section three is a repetition of section two. These three different parts may be spun round quite independently of one another, and in an opposite direction to the part adjoining, the friction at the points of the needles being very slight. Mr. H. C. Monckton, of 76, Lexham Gardens, Kensington, sends this photo.



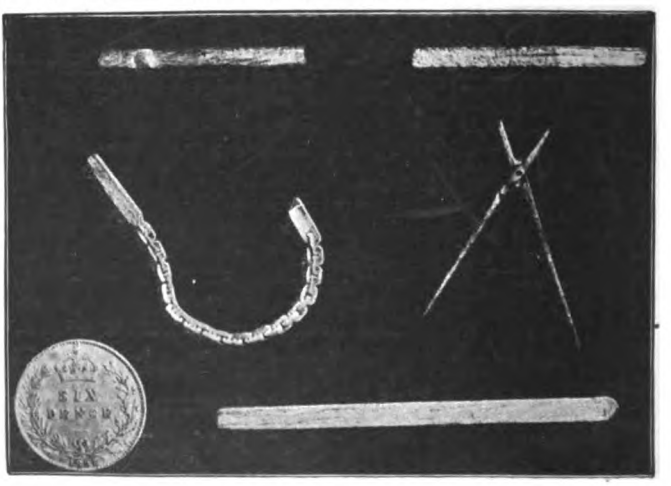
FATHER NEPTUNE'S COURT.

Mrs. Stempel, of 75, Albany Street, N.W., sends these amusing pictures, and writes an interesting account of what they represent. She says: "The accompanying photos. were given me by my son. They are very curious and interesting, illustrating the actual ceremony of Father Neptune's Court, held when crossing the line on a sailing vessel. The photo. No. 1 is Neptune and his wife. The lady is represented by my son, apprentice, aged seventeen years. No. 2 is the Court, and a sailor just about to be tarred and shaved. The little man to left of picture is watching the operation and waiting his turn, and, judging by the expression of his face, with no great amount of pleasure. I may mention that the photos. were taken and developed by one of the A.B. seamen on board."



MADE FROM A MATCH.

Mr. Joseph W. Russell, of 74, Seymour Street, Euston Road, has carved the wonderful objects represented in the next two photographs, and he gives some particulars of how the work was done. He says: "My curios, namely, the chain and tweezers, or rather pincers, were carved from an ordinary lucifer match; the chain contains twenty-nine perfect links, with half an inch of the match still uncarved! It was made entirely by myself when I was forty-six years of age, and within the space of ten hours of a single day; the only tools used being a common Jack knife—which I still possess—and an ordinary sewing needle sharpened at the point to separate the links. As a curiosity it is decidedly unique, and stands without a parallel in the history of the world; and although I possess many other wonderful things, including gold wire much finer than any human hair, I consider the chain match the masterpiece of my life, and were I offered a hundred pounds I could not duplicate it. The chief point of interest in the pincers or tweezers lies in the fact of their not being made in two pieces crossed and riveted (which would be a very simple thing to do), but by being cut from one solid match. To accomplish this in a first-class pair of pincers or pliers made of iron or steel, an opening or aperture is made near the rivet-hole of the one piece, the other piece is inserted, the joint closed up and formed whilst red hot, a feat, needless to say, which would be impossible in this case! The making of the box to hold the pincers is quite simple compared with the above joint. I should like to add that these curios are free of fraud or trickery of any kind, and will bear the strictest microscopical investigation."



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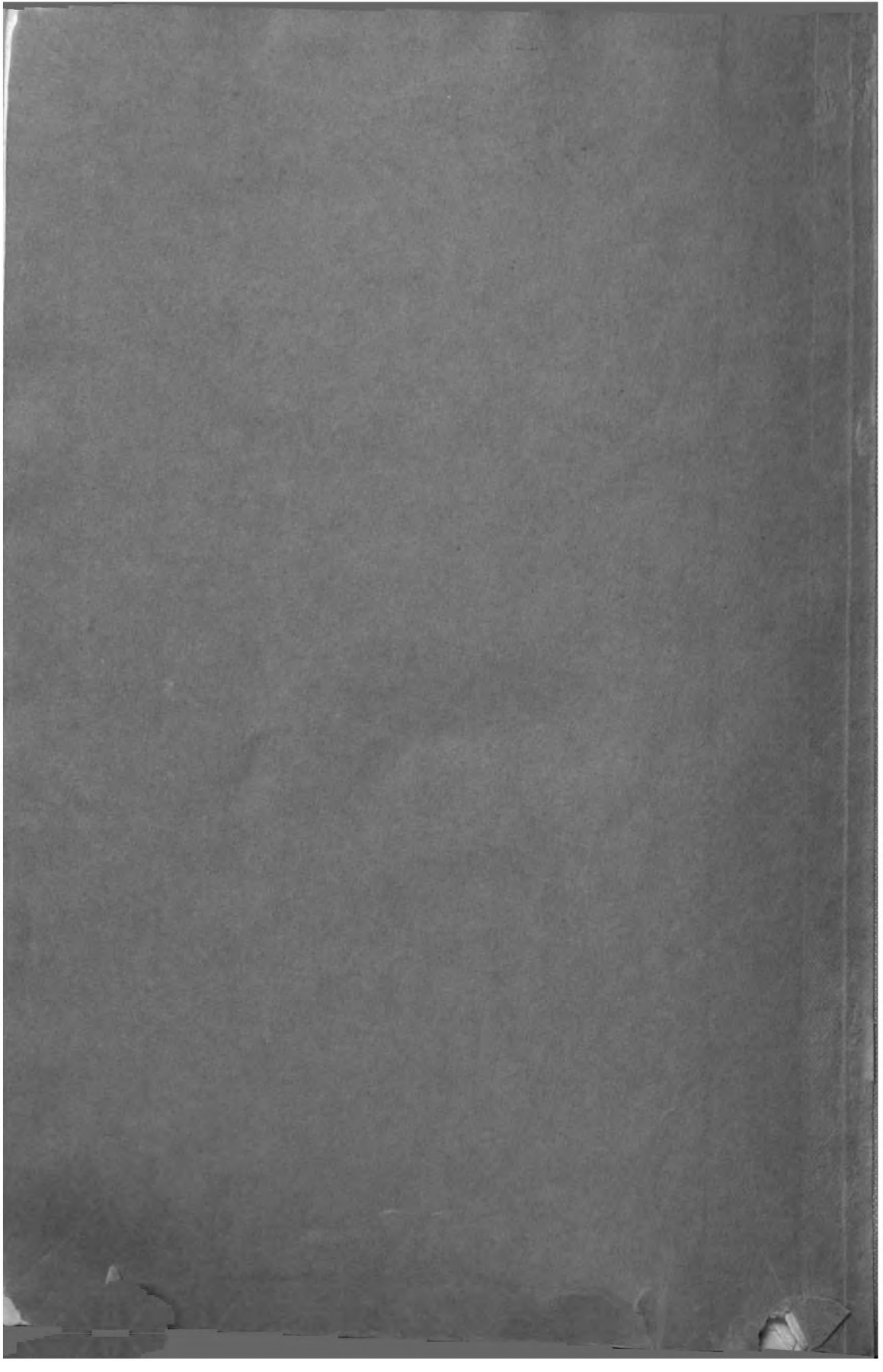

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